SRI SIDDHARUDHA SWAMIJI

(A SHORT BIOGRAPHY)

SRI SIDDHARUDHA MISSION
BANGALORE

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(A SHORT BIOGRAPHY)

Original in Kannada;
VIDVAN N. RANGANATHA SHARMA

Translation into English;
SRI T.N. PADMANABHAN

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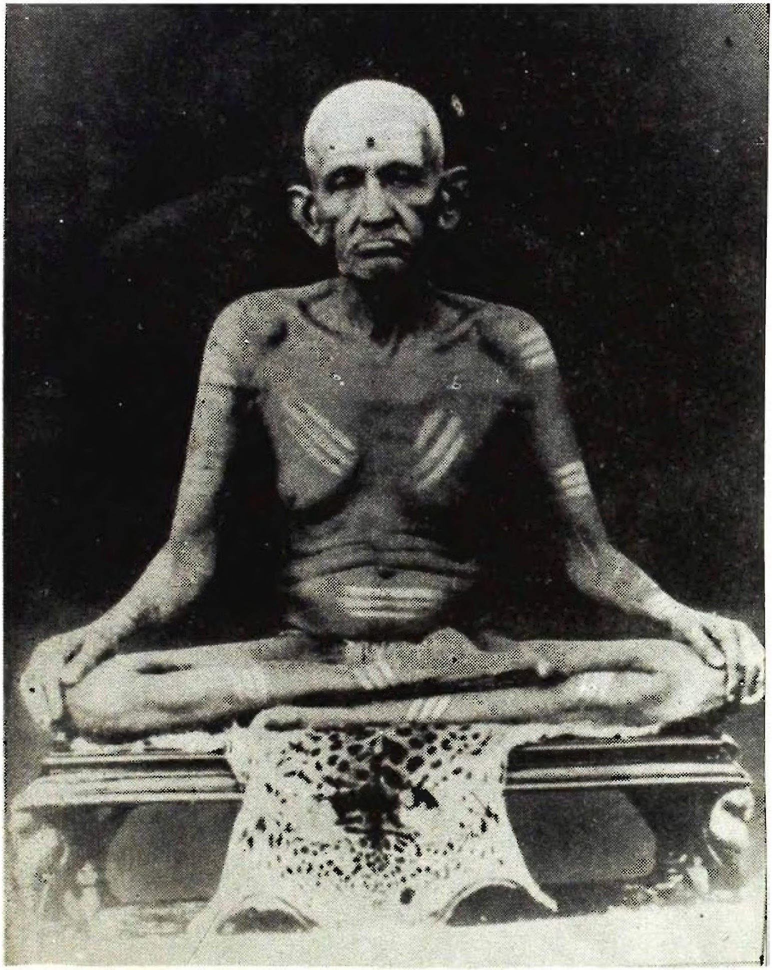
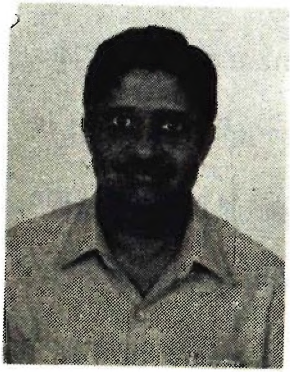


SRI SIDDHARUDHA SWAMIJI

SRI GURUNATHARUDHA SWAMIJI



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"After a laps of twelve centuries since the period of Sri Adishankaracharya, the incornation of Sri Siddharudha Swamiji is seen at the right time. There is a need for the proportion of Advaita Philosophy but all the living beings under one root, to live with mutual love and peace............

Great personalities from various walks of life, irrespective of their caste creed, colour, belief and other aspect came to Sri Siddharudha Swamiji, who though born in a family belonging to a particular sect, never made any discrimination, among the people. He treated every one equally".

– **Justice Nittor Srinivasa Rao**
Rtd. Chief Justice of Karnataka

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PREFACE

The Upanishad says that God created Dharma as the regulating Power of the world. Whenever this Dharma suffers a set-back the Lord himself comes down or sends his representatives to this world to re-establish it. Siddharudha swamy belongs to this line of hundreds of saints in human history who came down to this world for this purpose.

It is a hard task to write the biography of this person and of other such persons. Like the ice berg floating in the ocean, their life and greatness visible to the external eye constitute a very small part. The under current of their experience of the self is enormous.

However, it is the duty of scholars to place before the people the life, personality and teachings of such men who are born to secure the good of the world from this angle. Vidwan N. Ranganatha Sharma has done this sacred duty satisfactorily. Just as a skilled weaver, weaves an attractive cloth from out of yarn of two or three colours, Vidwan Ranganatha Sharma has written this booklet with great skill. He has given a brief and interesting account of Sri Siddharudha's life, incidents, teachings, disciples, history of the math and such other subjects. The Siddharudha Mission has taken pains to bring out this gem. We congratulate both of them.

6.2.1996

Swamy Harshananda
President,
Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore

AUTHOR'S NOTE

My birth place is Nadahalli, a village in Soraba Taluk. My father had great interest in Vedanta. He was not familiar with Sanskrit. Therefore he was studying Vedanthic Texts available in Kannada. He was fond of "GEETA RAHASYA" of Lokamanya Tilak and "KAIVALYA PADDHATI" of Nijaguna Shivayogi and such other works. He was discussing subjects relating to Vedanta with people who were visiting our house. During those discussions I remember him saying "Where are the enlightened now? There is one, namely Sri Siddharudha Swamy of Hubli". He was repeatedly saying this. I may be about ten or twelve years then. This relates to the years 1926 to 1928 roughly.

Two friends of mine, a little younger to me, disappeared from the house. Their parents enquired in the surrounding villages. The boys could not be traced. After ten or twelve days the missing boys returned home. On enquiry it was learnt that the two boys had gone to Siddharudha math of Hubli. It appears that their object was to become the disciples of Sri Siddharudha. They did not reveal what their intention was and why they came back from there.

One day the news of the demise of Sri Siddharudha of Hubli reached my father. That day he was very

much depressed and was speaking only about Sri Siddharudha. The purpose of saying this here is to indicate how wide-spread was his reputation. The point that Siddharudha was a person of spiritual enlightenment stayed in my mind.

Some years ago a student of Bangalore Sanskrit College, by name Prabhulinga, came to me and requested me to teach one or two advanced texts on Sanskrit grammar. I found that he was intelligent and quick grasp and had agreed to teach him. Then I came to know that he belonged to the line of deciples of the math. The desire to know the special features about Sri Siddharudha took root in me. This disciple brought two books and gave them to me. I felt that it was the writing of old timers and the historic material was very inadequate. Then he gave me a few more books. I was able to get historical material to some extent. Information about Sri Siddharudha's teaching and his line of analysis was very little. Writing on miracles was more. Heaping praises on a person by using high sounding expressions does not make him great.

Prabhulinga started telling me that I should write a book on Sri Siddharudha. I told him, "Let me see". Days rolled on. In the meantime this disciple became a Scholar in grammar and passed M.A. too. Though engaged otherwise, thinking that I should not delay any more I wrote this book and completed it, under

the title "The realised person of Hubli - HUBBALLIYA SIDDHAPURUSHA". This book contains a brief life history of Sri Siddharudha. The historical material is very inadequate and so is the material on Sri Siddharudha's method of analysis of spiritual subjects. I could not get sufficient materials from the books so far Published. The authors of those books might have faced the same problem; still they were of great help to me. I offer my salutations to all of them with gratitude.

A meritorious person by name 'Master Mahashaya' regularly wrote down the nectar of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and rendered great service. The teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi have come down to us through the writings of the devotees. But in the case of Sri Siddharudha, no one wrote down his teachings. Many scholars were coming to him. They did not have the inclination to write down the details in an orderly manner. **There did exist a great person in the Kannada land. Still it is deceived by not having a proper record of the person**. It is true that his disciples wrote a couple of books. But they do not contain daily recordings of the events. They were written at different times independently.

Among the devotees visiting Sri Siddharudha's math, blind followers seeking worldly gains formed the majority. Their feeling was that all their aspirations would be fulfilled by just visiting the math and having

the darshan of Sri Siddharudha. They were not after knowledge. They were responsible for spreading the feeling that Sri Siddharudha was a Lingayat and the math belonged to Lingayat Community. If caste consideration is tied to spiritual matters, then the spiritual value recedes.

Sri Siddharudha did not wear Linga. He did not tell any one not to wear it. Also he did not blame the caste system and the special duties prescribed for each order in society. The conduct of the aspirant is different from that of the accomplished. "For those who have attained yogic status. Which is beyond the triple qualities of SATVA, RAJAS and TAMAS and who are deriving joy from within, there is no compulsion and no prohibition", states Shankaracharya[1]. We are not to follow what they do; we have to follow their teachings. Those who are in the stage of practice have both compulsion as well as prohibition. Those who say that their conduct too has to be followed may have to leave home like Sri Siddharudha wearing `Koupeena'.

I could not get satisfactory explanation to the following two doubts from any book -

1. After Sri Siddharudha came to Hubli and settled there, his parents must have come to know this event. Did they not go to see their son who had attained fame or did they? If they had gone there, details have to be

``निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां को विधिः को निषेधः ?"

made available. If not, reasons therefore should be provided. At that time, had both of them expired? Sri Siddharudha's brothers, relatives and those who lived in his village must have gone to see him at least out of curiosity.

2. When Sri Siddharudha Swamiji came to Hubli, he was sitting on the platform of the tomb of Chidghanananda Swamy. Let us say it is quite natural. But he had his sleeping room built, including this tomb in it. This makes it clear that he held Chidghanananda Swamy in great esteem. Who was this Swamy in the tomb? What was his eminence?

There is need for bringing out a comprehensive book after a deep study of his historical details, giving importance to his attainments and teachings. This is possible if Vidwans well versed in the art of writing books take up this task.

I wish that Sri Siddharudha Swamiji may shower his blessings on Vidwan S. Prabhulinga, M.A., who prompted me to write this book and extended all co-operation to offer a flower at the feet of Sri Siddharudha Swamy. The famous Astrologer, Late Dr. B.V. Raman has kindly furnished the date month and year of Sri Siddharudha's birth, in terms of the Christian era. He has done a great favour to me.

18-6-1996 **N. Ranganatha Sharma**

Bangalore

PUBLISHER'S SUBMISSION

Sri Siddharudha Swamiji is one among the rare and great saints that India saw during the middle of the 19th and 20th centuries. The abilities and attitudes he had developed in his early days remind us of Acharya Shankara. History tells us that even when he was five years he was interpreting the meaning of the syllable 'Om' to his teachers. This may appear to be a miracle. Some may feel that it is impossible. But it is possible for those who have slipped from yoga and Sri Siddharudha is one such. So we cannot say that it was impossible for him. Any miracle can be performed by the yogic powers. But they are far inferior to self - knowledge.

Seeing Sri Siddharudha walking fast, a certain person asked him, "whose son are you?" The reply was, "I am my son". We may wonder as to what kind of reply it is. But by the manner in which it was explained, we cannot but come to the understanding that it was really a sound reply. The Taittireeya Upanishad says that the space was born out of this ATMAN[1]. Having this as the basis, he had furnished that reply. He unfolded the same in minute detail. This indicates the depth of Sri Siddharudha's spiritual knowledge.

Once Balagangadhara Tilak was to address a public meeting organised by the national freedom-fighters. The

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1``तस्माद्वा एतस्माद्वा आत्मान: आकाश: सम्भूत: "

British Government prohibited the meeting. On this account, every one was reluctant to take the chair. Then Sri Siddharudha himself came forward to take the chair with courage. This throws light on his sense of social obligation.

During one of the festivals in the math a poor lady devotee gave a contribution of money equivalent to the present eight paise, desiring that it should reach all the devotees. People around were dumb founded. But Sri Siddharudha accepted the money, asked a servant of the math to purchase green coriander from out of 8 paise for use in the 'rasam' to be served to the devotees. There was a good supply of grains and other things to the math through the devotees. Nothing was wanting, still Sri Siddharudha was collecting the grains scattered here and there. This is an instance which shows Sri Siddharudha's prudence in matters of management.

Siddharudha was made to wear silken attire and gold or silver crown and was being worshipped. After this he was made to wear tattered cloth and to hold an earthen bowl for worship. This bears anology with Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, having gold in one hand, and mud in the other hand throwing away both in the Gangetic waters.

Siddharudha's personality was multifaceted. Several books have been brought out on him in Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, English and Telugu. Still it should be stated that a comprehensive volume containing accurate details

of his teachings is not available. This is the difficulty being faced for preparing an all - inclusive biographical volume about him. Sri Siddharudha Mission has come into existence with the intention of establishing a Gurukula, publishing valuable works etc.

It is a matter of great pleasure that revered Vidwan Sri N. Ranganatha Sharma who is my teacher has written this book in Kannada by the title "Hubballiya Siddhapurusha". Several distinctive aspects have been included in it. Identifying Siddharudha's date of birth as 26.3.1836, according to the Christian Calendar, is one such. The same book is translated in to English, which is now in your hand, by Sri T.N. Padmanabhan a close disciple of Late Sri D.V.G. a well known Kannada Author. Our grateful thanks to him. I thank Mr. M. Radhakrishna for his help in proof reading.

Venerable Sri Harshananda Swamiji has made this book attractive by his preface. I offer my salutations to him.

I also offer my salutations to my Guru, Vidwan Sri N. Ranganatha Sharma, to the donors **Smt. Mani Shadakshari** and the Author, **Sri S. Shadakshari, Ramanashree Pratisthana, Bangalore,** to the staff of Sreenivasa Printing Press for printing it nicely in time and to Sri M. G. Kammar who has made a beautiful portrait of Sri Siddharudha Swamy.

Bangalore
11-2-2001

S. Prabhulinga Devaru
(Sri Siddharudha Mission)

1

"न प्रभातरलं ज्योतिरुदेति वसुधातलात्"

(A celestial light does not arise from the surface of the Earth)

Our holy land Bharat is the cradle of spiritual wisdom. As Lord Krishna declares in the Gita अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानाम् - Adhyatma Vidya is the most celebrated of all. This is very profound and imperceptible by the sense organs. A man may some how examine and experiment the objects that are directly perceived by the Indriyas or sense organs. But the Atman is not such an entity. All enquiries and speculations about the Atman fail to reach him. Only inteetive knowledge of the mystic seers can reveal that Atman. All logical enquiries come to dead stop at this stage. We may logically prove that there is an Iswara who is the cause of creation of this universe. But we cannot verify the answer by mere Tarka or Logic. Many questions arise about him. For example see these questions - What is the True nature of Iswara? Is He masculine or feminine? Or, Is he neither? Has he a form or not? If he has, of what form is it? If he is formless i.e., he has no body with limbs, how does he create this universe? What is the stuff that is used for producing the universe? From where was it obtained? Such questions are endless. All these questions can not be satisfactorily answered by means of logic. So how are we to understand that Supreme Truth of this universe?.

The great sages of our country have therefore concluded as follows:-

प्रत्यक्षेणानुमित्या वा यस्तूपायो न विद्यते ।
एनं विदन्ति वेदेन तस्माद्वेदस्य वेदता ।।

That, for knowing which, there is no way by perception or inference, is to be known through the Vedas. And this is the eminence of the Vedas.

वेदयतीति वेद :- That which enlightens us upon the Truth is Veda. It is understanding of our ancients that the Lord Himself taught the Vedas. The great philosopher Bharthrihari also declares that the Divine knowledge of the sages emanated from the Vedas*.

The latter part of the Veda is designated as Upanishads otherwise known as Vedanta. Vedanta is that which enshrines the essence of the teaching of the Vedas. Adhyatma Vidya is Vedanta. This is known to all.

Advaita Darsana is the conclusive teaching that is determined by the Upanishads. It is on account of the merit of the good deeds done in a number of past births that one gets an inclination towards spiritual enquiry. Again on account of his punya such an aspirant comes across (gains the blessings of) a Sadguru. Being equipped with the spiritual disciplines like conquest of the mind and by staurch devotion towards the

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* "ऋषीणामपि यज्ज्ञानं तदप्यागमपूर्वकम्"

preceptor, he gains an insight into Brahmajnana by the grace of the preceptor. Such a person is a realized person or Siddha Purusha. There have been many such Siddha purushas in our country They were all Jeevanmuktas. Some of them take pity on those immersad in ignorance and compassionately impart the divine knowledge to those samsarins. It is only on account of these worthy preceptors that the light of spiritual knowledge is guarded for the benefit of the coming generations. Such selfless preceptors are called Siddha Purushas. They are realised souls and they are not in need of any spiritual disciplines. Sri Siddharudha Swamiji of Hubballi was such a Siddha Purusha.

Parentage, time and place:

Chalakapura is a small hamlet in the Taluk of Bhalki of Bidar District. It was verily a cultural centre on account of the spiritual activities that were held now and then in that small village. There is a temple of Anjaneya which is the centre of cultural activities. People of that village were naturally cultured. An elderly person of that place by name Gurushantappa was a well known pious person. He lived in that village with his wife Devamallamma. They were ideal householders and were respected by the people of that place. By some good fortune they became the parents of Sri Siddharudha Swamiji. Sri Siddharudha was

born as the third son of these virtuous parents. Sanganabasappa and Noorondappa were his elder brothers. The date of birth of Sri Siddharudha according to the Indian almanac is recorded as Shalivahana Saka 1758, year named Durmukhi, month Chaitra Suklapaksha, Navami the ninth day, Saturday and the birth star Punarvasu corresponding to the Christian date 26.03.1836. That day was the auspicious day of Sri Ramanavami which verily pointed to the eminence of the child born on that day. The parents named the child 'Siddhappa' which also spoke of the eminence of the child. The word 'Siddha' is meaningful, and the Geeta points out that one gains the highest goal after being perfected through a number of births*. This boy was born as a Jnana Siddha. Every one used to call him by the name 'Siddha' and that became his true name.

A mahatma by name Veerabhadra Swamy arrived on the day of 'Namakarana' or the naming ceremony and suggested that the boy should be named as Siddhappa. Having observed the unique astrological characteristics of the child, the Swamy was surprised and said to the mother indicating the greatness of the child, 'Do not be under the illusion that this is an ordinary child. This is born as a realised person. Be repeating the Panchakshari Mantra, when you breast, milk the child. Think of only good thoughts'.

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* अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम्

The father of Siddha, Gurushantappa belonged to the Banajiga sect among Veerasaivas. Trade and agriculture were his profession. Though he was not highly educated, he was a good man full of faith. He was loved for his good qualities by the people of the village. There was no paucity for food and clothing for him. He brought up Siddha very affectionately. It is said that even when Siddha was young, some miracles and wonderous things happened. It is said that a buffalo fell dead when Siddha uttered the words 'die' to it on account of some reason. Later being unable to see the sorrowing of the owner of the animal, Siddha said, 'Stand alive' and the animal got back life and stood up. On the day of Sankranti, Siddha distributed oil seeds and jaggery kept in a small pot, to all of his friends and it is said that the stuff was inexhaustible, however much he gave to any number of people from it. Siddha taught some one Jalastambhana Vidya and made him drown in the tank. The mother of the boy was bitterly crying, thinking that the boy was dead. Then he did the miracle of calling that boy to come and the boy did come out of the water to the side of his mother. These miracles may be the imagination of the followers or they may be even true. The great Patanjali declares in his Yoga-shastra that various kinds of powers are acquired by the Yogins. The Puranas abound in the descriptions of miracles worked out by the sages. These are not

unreal. But there is no need to glorify Sri Siddharudha Swamy on account of these miracles. Even a magician can do miracles. It is learnt that the rakshasas of yore possessed various powers. It is quite common for the followers of all faiths to attribute miracles to their great masters. The followers of Christianity and Islam have been narrating that Jesus Christ and Mohammad Pygambar and others did such miracles. The life stories of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Basavanna, Jnana Deva and other such devotees are invariably associated with accounts of miracles. That has happened even in the case of modern saints like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

The greatness of a person depends upon his virtues like knowledge, dispassion, conquest over senses, compassion, efficiency, affection towards disciples, desire to help the people of the world, non-injury to any one, Truthfulness and equality towards all, and not on only miracles. Realization of the knowledge of the Atman is more celebrated than mere scholarship. Self-knowledge is not some thing to be instructed. When it reflects in the actions, words and behaviour and in all the activities of one's life, he becomes a Mahatma. He becomes an ideal for others to follow. Descriptions of miracles are not liked by moderners, who are rationalists and so they are not treated elaborately here.

Siddha's parents desired to send Siddha to school when he was five years old. Siddha said that he did not want knowledge of the letters, but agreed to go to school yielding to their wishes. The teacher wrote 'Omkara' on the slate and asked Siddha to trace it again and again. He said 'Siddha, you must write over this in the same way uttering the syllable 'Om'. Siddha sat for practice. His mind began to think of the meaning of 'Omkara'. Siddha asked the teacher to teach him the meaning of 'Omkara'. The teacher said - 'You cannot know the meaning now. You can know it when you grow up. Now practice writing it.' Siddha said, 'Sir, I must first know the meaning of 'Omkara'. The teacher replied, 'Wisemen can say its meaning. What do I know?'. Siddha returned home and never again went to the school.

Veerabhadra Swamy was discoursing on the Puranas everyday in the house of Gurushantappa. Siddha was very much interested in listening to them. He was listening to the exposition of the Purana very earnestly, sitting by the side of his mother. One day Veerabhadra Swamy said, "The Lord has created the five elements namely Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. Isvara alone is the cause of creation and destruction. All this creation is non-eternal. One day all the five elements get destroyed". Siddha who was attentively listening to this, posed a question, 'Sir, we can admit

the destruction of Earth, Water, Air and Fire. How is Ether destroyed?. It has no form. It is not possible to feel it. It has neither taste nor odour. Akasa is mere void. How is it destroyed?. Veerabhadra Swamy was surprised at this question. No answer flashed to him. He sincerely replied, 'Siddha, your question is right. Answer to this does not occur to me. You must know the answer from a proper teacher'. From that moment there grew an urge in the mind of Siddha to seek a teacher. That desire stood firm in his mind. An occasion was needed for its fulfilment.

Siddha was playing with his play-mates in the fields of Chalakapura. A serpent came from somewhere and when Siddha went near a bush it bit him. That was witnessed by all boys. Siddha fell unconscious. The boys came running to his parents and informed them of this. With great grief they hurried there. Siddha's body had become green with the snake poison. He was unconscious. They thought that he was dead and the parents wept piteously. They were all immersed in great grief.

A group of Jangamas was passing that way and on seeing the crowd the Jangamas came there. Their chief Sanyasin examined the boy and turning towards Siddha's parents, he asked, 'Are you the parents of this boy?'. They said, 'Yes'. Then the Sanyasin said to them, 'Well, I shall save this boy on one condition.

If you agree to it I shall bring him back to life'. Who would not agree to that condition at such a critical time? The parents asked what that condition was. The Sanyasin said, 'After he comes back to life you must allow him to go according to his wish. You should not obstruct him. He will become a great personage. He has the signs of becoming a Virakta Sanyasin. The parents said in their anxiety, 'We will be happy if he lives. We do not mind his becoming a Sanyasin'.

The Sanyasin placed his hand on the head of Siddha and muttered some thing. It is said that the same serpent came there within a short time and disappeared after sucking the poison from his body. Siddha opened his eyes and sat up. He prostrated to the Sanyasin. The joy of the parents knew no bounds. Those that had gathered there were dumb founded. The Sanyasin got Siddha anointed as prescribed and adorned him with Thripundra and performed the rite of Lingadharana and uttered the prophesy. 'You will become a Mahapurusha'. saying so they went their way.

Gurushantappa and Devamallamma came home joyfully with their son. Siddha's path of quest for the Truth became clear. The celestial luminary arises and shines in the sky. It will not be born on the earth.

– 2 –

``यदहरेव विरजेत् तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत्"

(The day detachment dawns one should become an ascetic and depart)

Siddha came to know what transpired after the serpent bite. He restrained his parents from offering any impediment for his becoming a mendicant. The main reason for this was that a mendicant saved his life. He told his parents in clear terms that he would not stay at home and that he would go away in quest of spiritual knowledge. By then Siddha was ten years old. This decision at that age was indeed amazing. What a strange thing it is that during the age when he has to sport with other children, he developed intense desire for spiritual enlightenment ! Father Gurushanthappa and mother Devamallamma felt that the very heavens came down on their heads. On the one side they had to keep their word given to the wandering mendicant. At the same time the son is hastening to depart from the house as an ascetic. They were tongue-tied to say 'no'. They mechanically uttered 'yes'. Siddha's unusual retentive faculty, the events that went off as a miracle, the boys inclination towards detachment to worldly objects, his longing for solitude and acquisition of knowledge-all these factors were reflected in the mind of the parents. The couple came to the conclusion that all this was the will of God, one cannot go against it, and the Lord himself looks after the boy's interests. Making up their

mind, the parents blessed their son and gave him a send off. Siddha received their blessings and set off from the house after taking leave of his brothers and other relatives and friends. The parents accompanied him upto a distance and returned with tears trickling from their eyes.

In this connection it is relevant to remember an event, which took place long ago in the age of 'Dwapara'. Sage Suka, abandoning all religious rites became an ascetic even before investiture into thread-ceremony and set off from the house. His father, Sage Vyasa, unable to bear the separation, ran after him shouting 'My son, My son'. The trees all around echoed the same words. A reference to this event is found at the very beginning of Bhagavatham, where the greatness of the MAHAPURANAM is extolled*.

Shankara the great teacher of nondualistic philosophy took to asceticism out of emergency in his seventh year and was setting out from the house in search of a Guru leaving behind his sobbing mother. When he got into the river for bathing, he was seized by a crocodile. He was released from the jaws of the crocodile after the sorrowing mother on the bank of the river agreed to her son becoming an ascetic.

The readers should notice the beautiful similarity between these two anecdotes and the serpent bite and

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* यं प्रव्रजन्तमनुपेतमपेतकृत्यम् द्वैपायनो विरहकातर आजुहाव ।
पुत्रेति तन्मयतया तरवोऽभिनेदुः तं सर्वभूतहृदयं मुनिमानतोऽस्मि ।।

the subsequent renunciation of Sri Siddharudha Swamiji.

When Siddha left home, he did not have anything with him, except a loin-cloth and a single cloth to wrap himself. For those who leave home with a sense of detachment intensely longing for spiritual enlightenment, everything else is a trifle except knowledge. On a later occasion, Siddharudha has said "When I left home, I had nothing with me barring a loin-cloth and a wrapper. I had no desire to accumulate wealth. I came out of the house to acquire higher knowledge. Knowledge means spiritual knowledge. Spirit means the Self within. I did not want to have knowledge relating to worldly affairs".

When Siddha left his village, it seems his friends by name Soma and Bheema followed him. It is not known as to who were those boys and whether their parents agreed for their going. They walked with Siddha for two to three days without food and sleep, and got exhausted. When hunger raged within, their false sense of detachment receded. They informed their plight to Siddha and got back to their village and saved themselves from the ordeal. How long can the imposed detachment sustain? How long can fragmented flower plant remain in the ornamental vase without withering? Siddha alone proceeded, satiating his thirst by the waters of the rivulets, satisfying his hunger by alms and over coming fatigue under the roadside shelters and dilapidated temples. He was

going in search of Guru. But he was unaware who he was and where he was. No one had told him the particular place where he could find a self-realised person. If it was so, is it possible to see the Guru by aimless wandering? Siddha's conviction was, "without God's grace, it would not be possible to see a great Guru. People may show a person acceptable to them as a Guru. But what is the evidence to show that he is a realised soul? Therefore one should surrender to only Lord Shiva to find a Guru. By his grace the Guru appears before the devotee by himself". With this conviction, meditating on Lord Shiva, reposing full faith in Him and offering prayer to Him to show the Guru, he proceeded in the direction prompted by Him. Visiting several sacred places and moving about in woods, hills and dales, he landed himself in Sri Sailam.

Once when the pontiff of Sri Sailam was seated in the assembly, Siddha went to him and prostrated to his feet. On gazing at the boy, the pontiff could perceive an unusual brightness in his face. He grew curious and asked, "Dear child, who are you? Where from have you come? What brings you this side?" Siddha replied "Guruji I belong to Bidar district. I have set out in search of SADGURU. It is my intention to know who I am. It is clear that the body and sensory organs are not `I'. It is said that I am myself the ATMAN. What is the nature of ATMAN? I want to know clearly whether the ATMAN is different in different beings or it is the same in all beings". The

pontiff was amazed. He had not seen any one having such longing for knowledge in such an young age. With his mind filled with joy, he blessed the lad saying, "My child, you are not the common boy that we usually come across. You have earned the grace of the Lord. May you see the Guru whom you are after". Siddha stayed in Sri Sailam for some more days and left the place one day for DARSHAN OF THE GURU.

The Guru shows up himself

Leaving Sri Sailam Siddha visited sacred places like Navanandi and Kalahasti, had darsan of the presiding dieties and continued his journey meditating on the Lord. As already stated he was feeding on what he got by way of alms. At last, he reached Surapura and stayed a few days in the shiva temple there, and developed familiarity with sages and saints, who came there off and on. He discussed details regarding ATMAN with them, widened his knowledge and rejoiced. Days rolled on in this manner. One day some pious people told Siddha that there was a great person by name Gajadanda Swamy in a place called Amaragunda and that he was a realised person. All were unanimous in their opinion about the Swamiji. All were praising him for his greatness. Hearing all this, Siddha decided that Gajadanda Swamy alone was his Guru. As his desire to see him became intense, Siddha ascertained the road to Amaragunda and set out, journeyed for three days and reached Gurugunta.

Coming to know that the Swamiji was staying in the monastery, he went there and got the DARSHAN of Gajadanda Swamy. He prostrated to him and appealed to him saying, "I am your disciple. I have surrendered myself to you. Initiate me into higher knowledge and protect me".

Gajadanda Swamy looked at Siddha who was still a boy and asked him who he was and where from he came. Siddha replied that he was the son of Gurushantappa of Bidirukote.

It is established that the birth of Sri Siddharudha is Chalakapura. Why did he now say that it was Bidirukote ? The existence of a village by that name is not known. It may have the philosophical meaning, namely a nest made of bones. Bidiru means bamboo signifying bone. On another occasion he has referred to 'Vamsadurga' as his place. This also conveys the same meaning. Vamsa means bamboo.

The Swamiji was surprised at the boy's thirst for knowledge. He had known that all those who were going to the mutt were for food, clothing and happy living. Till then there might not have been any who went there for satisfying the thirst for knowledge. He decided to put the boy to further test and said to him "Well, stay in the Mutt rendering service. Let us see later". The time of Siddha's vairagya bearing fruit was nearing.

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"गुरुशुश्रूषया विद्या"

(Knowledge is gained by service to Guru)

Siddha gained entry into the mutt. His aimless wandering came to an end and he could settle in one place. There was no need for begging food. His only aim was to earn the grace of the Guru. Therefore he discharged even small jobs that were allotted to him, with diligence. He swept the floor, cleaned the vessels and even removed horse dung. While the Guru taught his disciples, he sat at a distance and listened to his teachings with attention. Sometime passed in this manner. Gajadanda Swamy was pleased with the service Siddha was rendering. He was observing Siddha sitting at a distance and listening to his teachings with concentration of mind. It became clear to him that the boy was attending to the duties of the math satisfactorily, that he had the real desire for knowledge and that he was indeed fit for knowledge. The Guru commanded him to come close and listen to his teachings and get his doubts, if any, clarified by asking questions. Siddha was over-joyed and felt blessed. There is a moral maxim which says "Knowledge is gained by serving the Guru or by offering a huge sum of money by way of fees or by imparting one kind of knowledge in exchange for another. Except these three courses, there is no fourth

course*. Siddha had neither money to pay nor any knowledge that Gajadanda Swamy needed. Service to Guru was the only thing that he could take to. In this moral maxim, knowledge means the science of logic and allied subjects, and not meta-physical knowledge. An enlightened Guru does not go after money at all. He needs no other sacred treatise. The preceptor takes into account the course of conduct, humility and faith in the disciple and imparts spiritual knowledge with pleasure. Spiritual knowledge is not a thing available for sale. Whether the disciple is entitled for this knowledge is all that the preceptor wants. Only the service at the feet of the Guru determines the entitlement of the disciple.

In course of time, Siddha became the favourite disciple of Gajadanda Swamy. The Swamiji taught him all the secrets of meta-physical knowledge. Siddha heartily accepted Gajadanda Swamy as his only mentor. One morning the discourse was going on. A scholar by name Subba Sastry of Surapura arrived there. He had earned reputation as a great scholar in several branches of knowledge. He did not seem to have a good opinion about Gajadanda Swamy. He appears to have said "Only the twice-born has the right to study the Upanishads. The subject relating to

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* गुरूशुश्रूषया विद्या पुष्कलेन धनेन वा ।अथवा विद्यया विद्या चतुर्थी न कदाचन।।

Brahman is very hard. Those who have not studied the science of logic and grammar etc. will not be able to grasp Vedanta". Siddha's mind was upset by Sastry's words of challenge hurled at his Guru. "I am going to give answer", so saying he stood up and began to speak with a steady and fearless voice.

"The Upanishad is a treatise on the knowledge of Brahman. The word has several meanings. One of the meanings is that it is a book to be studied sitting in the proximity of the Guru. Another meaning is that it is a work that destroys ignorance. It makes the Jeeva merge with Brahman is yet another meaning. We can analyse and say more. All human beings have a right to acquire knowledge-so says Sankaracharya. Who is a Brahmin? One who knows Brahman is a Brahmin. Those who do not have it, should all be considered as sudras. Veda itself has declared knowledge of the Self is not to be obtained by logic and allied subjects[1]. Logic has no limit[2]. Grammar can enlighten about the nature of the word. It cannot give the knowledge of the self. It can be known only by the grace of the Guru. Only he who has the experience has to enlighten us. Philosophical knowledge is not a thing to be decided by argumentation. It is a knowledge of experience. Logic and other related subjects are

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[1] नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया ।

[2] तर्कोऽप्रतिष्ठः ।

helpful for arguing out a given proposition in assemblies[1]. The grace of the Guru alone is the mightiest means for Self-knowledge".

Subba Sastry nodded his head in appreciation. Gajadanda Swamy smiled on listening to the articulate speech of his disciple. Subba Sastry was satisfied with the reply of Siddha.

Some days rolled. Gajadanda Swamy taught the secrets of the meta-physical knowledge in its entirity to Siddha. The Guru who was closely observing the attentive listening, recapitulation and repeated meditation of his disciple was filled with joy. One day he called Siddha to his side and affectionately said to him, "Dear Siddha, it is my good fortune to have a disciple like you. I have taught you all that I learnt from my Guru. Non-dualism is the ultimate Truth. You have realised this. You have appropriately been named as Siddha. You have in fact attained realisation. There is nothing more for you to learn in the math. You are free to leave this place for achieving the good of the world". After initiating him into ascetic order, he gave him Upadesa of the sacred Taraka Mantra. From then onwards the name "Siddharudha" came to stay.

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[1] विद्या विवादाय ।

"यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदवेतरो जनः"

(Other people follow the actions of the distinguished)

When Siddharudha left the monastery of Gajadanda Swamy, he was hardly 18 to 20 years and not more. That is the time when youthfulness dawns in man, that is the time when he falls a victim to the lurings of sensual pleasures and that is the verily the time when the mind is forcibly drawn towards carnal enjoyment. Qualities like celibacy, detachment from worldly enjoyments and control over the senses-internal and external, are not easily attainable. "The five organs of senses taken together are most powerful. They entice even a scholar". - so goes the statement of the elders[1]. This being the case, Siddharudha conducted himself with courage of conviction without swerving from the path of Dharma. He should have surely put in tremendous practice in his previous births. We have to conclude that he had realised Brahman and that he came down to the earth at his will for the good of the world. He renounced everything in his boyhood, left his parents, toured alone in woods, went in search of Guru, sustained himself by what he got by way of alms and rested under the shade of trees[2]. How is this to be accounted for? The only way in which this can be explained is

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[1] बलवानिन्द्रियग्रामो विद्वांसमपि कर्षति [2] करतलभिक्षस्तरूतलवासः ।

that he was already a realised man, even at his birth in this world. He went in search of a preceptor, only to observe tradition in order to show to the world that spiritual knowledge is to be gained only from the Guru and that it is not just book-knowledge. We have to come to the conclusion that Sri Siddharudha went to Gajadanda Swamy in order to establish the meaningfulness of the Vedic statement that only he who has a Guru can realise Brahman[1].

This is the conclusion at which we can arrive by a perusal of the biography of Sri Sankaracharya. Tradition says that Sri Sankara is the incarnation of Parameswara. All the biographies of Sankara proclaim that he had learnt the four Vedas at eight, that he had mastered all the branches of knowledge when he was twelve, that he wrote commentaries on the aphorisms of the Vedanta (Brahma Sutras) at sixteen and cast off his mortal frame and returned to his own place when he was hardly thirty two[2]. It is already stated that just as the serpentbite became the pretext for leaving home, the crocodile catching hold of Sankara became the pretext in his case. Govinda Bhagavatpada was the Guru of Sankara. Even Siddharudha went in search of the Guru in the same way as Sankara. When Govinda Bhagavatpada asked Sankara who he was,

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[1] आचार्यवान् पुरूषो वेद ।

2 अष्टवर्षे चतुर्वेदी द्वादशे सर्वशास्त्रवित् । षोडशे कृतवान् भाष्यं द्वात्रिंशे मुनिरभ्यगात् ।।

Sankara replied that he was neither the body nor the inner senses etc[1]. and that he was Siva whose characteristics are Chit (Gnyana) and Joy (Ananda)[2]. people of this sort do not need a Guru at all.

Therefore Siddharudha searched for a Guru in order to observe the formality of following the ways of the distinguished. In the past Vamadeva, Vasista, Vedavyasa and others were enlightened people even from their birth. This is a matter well known according to our legends. Even the enlightened take birth in this world, for its good and preach the human beings, so that they may pursue the path of Sreyas. They conduct themselves as all other common people. Even Lord Krishna went to a Guru by name Sandeepani. All this is to say that Sri Siddharudha was a realised person even when he was born. He did not have to learn spiritual knowledge from anyone. He did not learn any thing even for a day in a primary school. Renunciation and enlightenment formed a part of his being. Perhaps for completing the balance of his mission of his previous birth or with a desire to spread the Truth of the Non-dualistic philosophy in the world, by taking birth among the ignorant and shining as a godly person, he must have descended on the earth. It seems once Canna Vrishabhendra Swamy of Devarakonda had remarked "Siddha, you are not a

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1 नाहं देहो नेन्द्रियाण्यन्तरङ्गम् ।। 2``चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहंम् ।"

mortal. You are a Divine being and have come down on the earth as a human being". It is to be remembered in this context that sage Ramana of Tiruvannamale and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had the knowledge of the Self by themselves, without being taught by anyone, in the same way as Siddharudha. Though Siddharudha was an ascetic, he was not wearing yellow robes. It is proper to identify him, as one who had shaken off all worldly attachments. He removed the Linga from his neck in the very presence of Gajadanda Swamy. He did not feel its necessity at all. What ever it may signify, worship of Linga amounts, to worship of God super-imposing form and attributes on Him. For one who is confirmed in his knowledge that he is himself the ultimate Brahman, devoid of attributes and who is perfectly at peace, what is the use of worship of Linga? The words worship and service at once suggest Duality. How can worship take place if there is no concept of the worshipper and the worshipped and the act of worshipping? Pooja also presupposes the feelings "I want water, flowers and fruits for offering to God". All this can go on only with the cognition of Dualism. Until the feelings of Duality cease to exist, these aspects necessarily have to be there. Once these feelings die down, the individual merges with the Non-dualistic Brahman and becomes an AVADHUTA i.e., one who has shed off all worldly attachments

including feelings of Dualism and who has set aside the triple aspects of the doer, the action and object. As Sri Sankara has said, "One who has conquered the three qualities (Satva, Rajas and Tamas) and revels in the knowledge of Brahman sans qualities, is not bound by the rules of Do's and dont's. Do's and dont's all belong to worldly affairs born out of ignorance. They apply to those who entertain the feelings "I am the doer, I am the enjoyer of the fruit of action". They cannot go anywhere near AVADHUTA. If so, can he indulge in wicked acts opposed to Dharma? To entertain such a doubt is nothing but foolishness. Why does one who has out grown the feelings of love and hatred and free from all kinds of desires, indulge in wicked acts? There can be no action without love or hatred. In the case of AVADHUTA, love and hatred would have been burnt down and reduced to ashes. It must clearly be understood that the conduct of an AVADHUTA is not for house-holders like us ever in the midst of worldly affairs. There can be no worldly affairs without Dualism. In this aspect we are not to follow the conduct of the enlightened. The enlightened never says that we should follow his conduct. He preaches that our conduct should be in accordance with his teachings.

"एक एव चरेन्नित्यं सिध्यर्थमसहायवान्"

(One should be moving about all alone without the assistance of any one for Self Realisation)

No evidences are available as to the text-books on the basis of which Gajadanda Swamy was teaching the knowledge of the ultimate to his disciples. We may have to guess that he was teaching from the Upanishadic texts as they constitute fundamental and authoritative works for Nondualism. In addition, he must have included SHATSTHALA SIDDHANTA which expounds the essence of VEERASAIVA philosophy and the method of reconciling it with Vedanta. Nijaguna Sivayogi was a great seer and has authored works like KAIVALYA PADDHATI and PARAMARTHA GEETA. These works together might have been included. As for the aphorisms of the Vedanta philosophy, they are profound and logic-ridden and therefore incomprehensible for the disciples. On that account they might not have been considered in the scheme of teaching. This is just a conjecture. We may therefore reach the conclusion that the Upanishads, Bhagavad Geeta and the works of Nijaguna Sivayogi were the texts followed by Gajadanda Swamy. To study even these texts it is necessary to have a rudimentary knowledge of Sanskrit Literature.

Sri Siddharudha must have remained in the monastery of Gajadanda Swamy atleast for a period

of eight to ten years. During this period, he must have practised Sanskrit Language to the extent required. Subsequently, as he travelled in different states in India and as he got into contact with people speaking different languages, he would have become familiar with different languages. After settling in Hubli, devotees from different parts of the country were coming to him for having his 'darsan' and he was speaking with them in their respective languages. He could therefore acquire a sound knowledge of Kannada, Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Marathi, Urdu and Gujarati.

AVADHUTA is also referred to as 'PARIVRAJAKA' and 'YAYAVARA'. The former means one who sets out leaving home and other belongings. The latter means one who always keeps moving from place to place. Both these words were literally true in the case of Sri Siddharudha. After completing his stay in the abode of his preceptor, Sri Siddharudha left the place alone as per the statement of Manu (one should be moving all alone without any one to assist, for realising the Self). He had no equipments except a strip of cloth to cover the private part and a cotton vastram to wrap himself. This is the significance of the statement "without any one to assist". The fructification of the knowledge gained by the study of the world, worldly experience and instruction- all these result in fulfilment of the highest, with this objective in view, he travelled from place to place.

During those days about 140 years ago, there were no good roads, no buses and trains in our country. Even if there were some vehicles, Sri Siddharudha did not have money to pay. He did not have the desire to get into them either. When his destination itself was not known, how could he think of journey by any vehicle? His aim was to move about in the country. Therefore he wandered by foot. He was satisfied with the food he received by way of alms and rested under the trees. Details of his movements are not available. Yet some details are gathered from his sacred utterances during the time of instruction and they are furnished here;

He walked in the woods without thinking of hunger, thirst and tiresomeness. He got on to the hills and mounts and walked down. He rejoiced at the sight of the beauty of nature and the sportings of animals and birds. He marvelled at the endless glories of the Lord. He observed the manners and customs of different communities. He conversed with the fellow travellers and became familiar with different Languages. In this manner he pursued his journey. His food was the alms given by the pious people here and there. He drank water from the tanks and rivers. He slept on the plat forms in front of temples or dilapidated pavilions. He derived pleasure from constant meditation on Lord Shiva and repetition of his name. In this manner Sri Siddharudha wandered in the country for some years as a PARIVRAJAKA deriving pleasure from within himself.

Roaming about in this manner, Sri Siddharudha once came to ANEGUNDI near Hampi and entered the temple of VIRUPAKSHA for 'darsan'. It seems the priest prevented him from entering the inside, thinking that he was a beggar as he was clad in rags. He shouted "You are a person of low caste. Do not get inside". Sri Siddharudha reacted to this in this manner. "Who is low in your opinion? Is it this gross body, causal frame or the ever-shining ATMAN? The gross body of all men is one and the same. All are contaminated. The causal frame is of the same kind in every one. It has no caste. On the other hand ATMAN is ever pure, enlightened and unbound. Among these who belongs to low caste? Whom are you preventing?" Then the priest realised that Sri Siddharudha was not a beggar and surely he was an enlightened AVADHUTA. He regretted for his words and begged him to pardon him. Siddharudha had the `darsan' of Lord VIRUPAKSHA and forgot himself in the contemplation on Siva.

He stayed in Hampi for a few days. Coming to know about him, people started coming there. Siddharudha was giving satisfactory replies to their questions on spiritual subjects. People interested in knowledge began to gather in large numbers, realising that he was not an ordinary person. Discourses began to take place. One of the descendants of the royal family of Anegundi came to know of the richness of knowledge of Sri Siddharudha. With the intention of

fetching the Swamiji to his mansion, he came by a coach drawn by a horse, placed his intention before him and requested him to get into the coach. Addressing him Siddharudha said, "You have been generous in inviting me. But why this coach? Why do I need this chariot? This body is the God-given chariot. I have already mounted on it. The sense organs are the horses. Mind is the reins. Intellect is the driver. But what have I got to do in your mansion? I am contented with the food received by way of alms". That royal descendant said, "Noble sir, my master has asked me to bring you. Scholars have assembled there. Spiritual discussion is going to take place". Then Siddharudha agreed and went there. Scholars have assembled in the hermitage called CHINTAMANI in the vicinity of the royal house. The Swamiji gave a discourse. All the people gathered extolled him saying, "This beggar is not an ordinary man. He is surely one who is enlightened".

In the course of his journey, Siddharudha went to Dwaraka. In one of the temples there, some people, in pursuit of knowledge, were engaged in Vedantic discussions. Siddharudha went there and sat by their side. Conversing with them, he said "Brahman alone is real, there is nothing beyond Brahman. The learned have already said that **Brahman is real and the world is illusory"***. One of the persons among them asked, "How are we to believe that Brahman is the Truth

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* ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या ।

and world is illusion? We are seeing with our own eyes the existence of objects like the earth, water, habitations etc. All our senses proclain the reality of this world. If you say what is actually seen is unreal, does it actually become unreal?" There upon, the Swamiji furnished explanation on these lines;

"There are three states called practical, appearance and Absolute. We are in the practical world. In this state the world is real. Do's and Dont's belong to this practical state. This cannot be denied. Illusion (appearance) means dream and incorrect understanding. In this state all objects appear as different from what they actually are. Living ones appear as dead and the dead appear as living. How do we perceive the world when we are in dream state? We feel like flying in the space. We feel like being chased by a Tiger. All these are real in the dream State. Dont you believe that in the dream state, we are not aware that we are dreaming? As soon as we are awake, all objects of the dream disappear. Where did they come from? Where did they go? Dont you believe that the dream is unreal? In the same way when we see a rope from a distance we may mistake it for a serpent. One who is under this misconception is frightened. When he goes near it, it is no longer a serpent. We understand that it is a rope. Have we not seen all this? Vedantins call this unreal. Similarly the entire world has been decided to be unreal. From the point of view of the Absolute, we come to know that

the world is unreal. Veda has proclaimed that the entire objects we see in this world are Brahman*. Is Veda false? Can the word of the seers become false? We come to know that the dream is false, when we come to the waking state. Like-wise we come to understand that the world is unreal, when we reach the Absolute state. The world is unreal with reference to the Absolute. "Listening to this exposition of the fact, all the people were struck with wonder. Siddharudha went to Ujjain and worshiped MAHAKALA, visited Madhura, Gokula and Brindavana and proceeded to Kashmir meditating on Lord Krishna. Visiting various sacred places in Kashmir, he went to Punjab. He came into contact with several saints and good people during his tours. He disscussed with scholars. All appreciated this marvellous wanderer. Siddharudha visited the seat of Guru Nanak and understood the contents of the Granth Saheb, the sacred book of the Sikhs. In that book much importance has been given to the sacred syllable `OM'. He accepted it as the proper course and taught the secret of meditation on `OM' to the people. There after, he visited Kurukshetra and Haridwara and proceeded to Badarikashrama and Kedaranath. In Kedaranath he entered into NIRVIKALPA SAMADHI - a state where there is no consciousness of the subject and the object or the known and the knowledge or knowing. After coming back to consciousness, he continued his journey and

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* सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।

reached Kasi visiting several sacred places en-route. He had the darsan of Lord Viswanatha in Kasi and relaxed near the well of knowledge. He stretched himself on the ground like a python and slept. At that time an ascetic by name Sivananda Swamy came there and touched him in order to find out whether he was practising YOGA in the posture of a dead body or merely lying down. Siddharudha opened his eyes. The ascetic asked him what that posture was. At once came the reply, "This is none of the postures. ASANAS are prescribed in the science of yoga to be followed at the level of practice by one who thinks that the body itself is the Self. There is no ASANA to one who is staying in the eternal undivided Brahman". The ascetic came to the conclusion that Siddharudha had perfect knowledge of the ultimate Truth and carried on philosophical discussions with him.

In the course of the discussions, the ascetic raised a question. He said, "Some scholars argue that there is a difference between object and its reflection. Some others argue otherwise. What is your opinion?". In reply to this question Siddharudha's explantion was this, "It is beyond words. There seems to be a difference as well as its absence. If you stand facing south and look at your reflection in the mirror, it faces north. So we have to say that the difference exists. But your facial form as well as its reflection look alike. You can see all your facial movements in the reflection. Then we have to say that no difference

exists. Difference or non-difference are mutually contradictory. Therefore it is my conclusion that the subject is beyond words to explain". The ascetic was over-joyed. He shared with him the food he had received by way of alms. Both were happy over their mutual contact.

When Siddharudha was moving about on the bank of the Ganges, he saw a saint lying nude. The saint turned to Siddharudha and asked "You have given up every thing. Why do you need a strip of cloth-KOUPEENA? What kind of renunciation is this?" Siddharudha put a counter question, "What is it that you have given up? Have you given up food and water? Have you given up going for alms? When you go for begging, will not men and women feel disgusted on seeing you in this form? Should you not have fear for rules of decency and decorum? You do not know the Truth because you think that I am different from you, which proves your faith in Dualism. Sankara himself has stated that those who wear `KOUPEENA' are indeed fortunate*. What is the use of external nudity ? You must purge yourself of all feelings of Dualism and become nude internally". With a sense of remorse for what he spoke, the ascetic asked him who he was. "I am the same as you are", was the reply of Siddharudha.

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* कौपीनवन्तः खलु भाग्यवन्तः ।

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``वाग्वैखरी शब्दझरी भुक्तये न तु मुक्तये "

(Articulation and eloquence are for earning bread and not for liberation)

Siddharudha was sitting in a temple in DASASWAMEDHA GHAAT. One by name Mahadeva Sastry was teaching his disciples commentaries on Logic. He was classifying matter, quality and action and the like, analysing each one of them and explaining them with great enthusiasm. Siddharudha was watching all this. After the lesson was concluded, addressing Mahadeva Sastry, he said, "Sastryji, Nyaya or Logic is over-ridden with subjects like matter, quality, action etc. They are inert objects not having any thing to do with the Supreme. What is the benefit gained by going deep into them?" Sastry replied, "Knowledge of the nature of objects leads to liberation, says the science of Logic. In order to get the knowledge of the Supreme, objects like matter have to be analysed in this manner. There is an aphorism in Logic to the effect that incorrect understanding, sorrow, birth, action, defect should go first. This can happen only by an analysis of matter etc. along these lines. Then the mind gets purified paving the way for Self-realisation[1]. Without

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[1] दुःख-जन्म-प्रवृत्ति-दोष-मिथ्या-ज्ञानानामुत्तरोत्तरापाये तदनन्तरापायादपवर्गः

analysing on these lines, Ignorance is not got rid of". There upon Siddharudha continued, "Sastryji, it is correct to say that false understanding should go. That cannot happen by the analysis of these inert objects. There is no end to these objects and therefore their analysis is an endless pursuit. Vedanta proclaims that knowledge of the Self is the only means for liberation[1]. The Upanishad has declared that one who knows Brahman becomes Brahman itself [2]. To become Brahman, one should know Brahman. The soul, by its very nature is Brahman, Out of ignorance, it thinks that it is different from Brahman and struggles in worldly life. This ignorance is related to ATMAN. The ignorance relating to ATMAN vanishes on a perfect understanding of the ATMAN. It is possible to get knowledge of the Self by analysis of the elements like the earth and water. Does knowledge of the pot lead to knowledge of the cloth? The "Brahma Sutra" preaches that we should know about Brahman and not about the world. An amazed Mahadeva Sastry said. "O, pious person, what you have spoken is true. But the science of Logic is like this. We being Logic teachers,have to teach it. Logic enables us in the proper understanding of Vedanta". Siddharudha smiled on hearing this.

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1 "नान्यः पन्थाः विद्यतेऽयनाय"   2 ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मैव भवति ।

Sri Siddharudha left Kasi and proceeded towards GAYA. At that time it started raining heavily. He sighted a big house belonging to a rich man in Mughal Sarai nearby. Siddharudha went there for shelter and sat on a step. A little later, a guard appeared there and asked him who he was and why he went there. Sri Siddharudha told him that he was a beggar and that he went there to seek shelter against rain. The guard abused him saying "Can any street-goer enter here? What do you think this house is?". Sri Siddharudha replied calmly that he thought that it was a guest house. To this, the guard reacted violently. Hearing this verbal exchange, the master of the house came out. Understanding the situation he asked why he said it was a guest house. Then followed the conversation between them as follows:-

Sri Siddharudha - Sir, who lived in this house in the past?

Master - My great grand father.

Sri Siddharudha - Then?

Master - My grand Father.

Sri Siddharudha - There after?

Master - My father; after my father I am here.

Sri Siddharudha - Who will be here after you?

Master - My children.

Sri Siddharudha - (Smiling) If people are occupying it one after the other, what else is it except a guest house?

The master was amazed at this and prostrated to him, took him to his house with all humility and

offering a seat to him, served him with devotion. His mother was suffering from stomach-ache. No treatment had given her relief. He brought her to Siddharudha and asked him to suggest a remedy. Siddha said "This is the result of past deed. If medicine has not cured her, worship of Lord Siva and other such prescriptions will bring necessary relief. It is said in religious Texts that the sin commited in the past birth tortures in the form of disease. It can be alleviated by medicine, by propitiating Gods through hymns by mentally repeating divine attributes and by making sacrificial offerings. Therefore see that Gods are propitiated through JAPA, HOMA etc.*" The rich man said, "Noble sir, where can we find great men like you? I entreat you to bless us". Siddharudha Swamiji had to yield to his humility and devotion. He gave water, with which his feet were washed, to his mother thinking of Lord Siva in his mind and asked her to meditate on Siva. She was completely cured of her stomach-ache.

Siddharudha stayed that night in deference to the pursuasion of the rich man. He was served with delicious dishes. He partook of them in limited and harmless quantity. Lying on the soft bed provided by the rich man he was reflecting in his mind "These

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* पूर्वजन्मकृतं पापं व्याधिरूपेण वाधते । तच्छान्तिरौषधैर्मन्त्रैर्जपहोमसुरार्चनै :।।

objects of enjoyment are not for men of our sort. They spoil the mind and they kindle the desire for more and more of them. If one comes under the grip of desire, that marks the end of the aspiration for liberation. Food procured by way of alms and a shade to lie down are quite enough". Before dawn he got up and went out of that mansion without telling any one.

On his way to GAYA there was a Siva temple. When he entered the temple, worship was going on. The singers began to sing verses in praise of Siva in the raga Bhairavi. Siddharudha suggested that the same may be sung in Sankarabharana as that raga was dear to Sankara and spoke a few words on Sankarabharana. He then went to GAYA where he did obeisance to VISHNUPADA. Visiting several holy places en-route, he reached the city of Jagannatha and arrived at the Kabirdas Mandir on the seashore. He was overjoyed to see the glory of Sri Rama being sung there. Addressing the devotees, he elaborated on the efficacy of Rama Nama thus "Rama's name is very sacred. It has the reputation of being called TARAKANAMA. The name releases the devotees from the fetters of worldly life and grants liberation. It is said that Siva distributed the Ramayana of Sage Valmiki among the three worlds and retained the two letters RA-MA for himself. Repetition of the name

RAMA grants both daily bread as well as salvation. such is the greatness of RAMA NAMA.

When he was continuing his journey, he was confronted by a river in floods. A boat-man was carrying people in his boat across the river for which he was charging fees. Siddha did not have even a pie with him. He said to the boatman "Sir, I have not even a pie with me. This Koupeena is my only wealth. Please take me in the boat across the river free of charge. God will do good to you". The boatman obliged. Siddha went into meditation on the bank of the river. That day the boatman had large number of customers and gained a lot of money. He attributed this to the power of that great man, procured a 'dhoti' and gave it to him with high sense of devotion. Siddha accepted just as much out of it as would be enough for Koupeena and returned the rest of it. Is it not the highest renunciation?

Then he went to Orissa and had the "darsan" of Lord Narasimha of Simhachala. As he was sitting near the GOMUKHA TEERTHA outside the temple, he heard the tumultous noise of the people. The situation was this - A Marvari house-holder was suffering from a disease for quite a long time. The disease was becoming more and more serious without responding to any treatment. The Marvari gentleman being unable

to bear the suffering and out of frustration had come there to commit suicide by jumping from a height. People had gathered there to save him from the sin of commiting suicide and to save his life.

Coming to know of this Siddharudha decided to give proper advice to him and asked them to bring the Marvari to him, assuring him that he would set every thing right. The wife and children of the Marvari gentleman were weeping at the top of their voice. The Marvari gentleman was brought to Siddharudha. Turning to him, the Swamiji said, "Gentleman, suicide is considered as a great sin. There is a moral aphorism to the effect that one can see good only if one holds on to living"*. The gentleman said, "Sir, death is preferable to living with this disease. What for should I live? I have decided to die". Asked by the Swamiji what was the suffering he was undergoing on account of the disease, he narrated all his difficulties. The high-minded Siddharudha went on to say, "Gentleman, human birth is most valuable. Man has greater power of analysis than all other beings. All organs of perception and function, are prepared to act as per his desire. Human birth should be utilised for achieving fulfillment. By commiting suicide, we will be ruining this valuable human birth. Suicide is not the proper

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* जीवन् भद्राणि पश्यति ।

course, listen to me". So saying, the Swamiji held him by the hand and seated him on the bank of Gomukha Teertha. Then he brought a hand-full of the sacred water and poured it on his head, repeating the sacred syllable `OM'. He did it several times. The pain of the Marvari came down. With feelings of great respect, he took the Swamiji to his house and worshiped him. By then, his suffering on account of the disease had totally receded. He said that he would give all his wealth to Siddharudha, who declined to accept it, saying that he had nothing to gain from money and asked him to take care to see that the disease did not recur. He advised him to give away half of his earnings to the poor and the worthy. thinking that it reaches me and retain the other half for running his family.

Siddharudha's purpose of visiting several sacred places was not to satisfy his curiosity. He was unlike other pilgrims, with the dual purpose of alleviating the suffering of the earthly beings in their life's journey and spreading the knowledge of the Self. He moved from place to place. When he was coming down from a mountain called MANGALAGIRI after having the DARSAN of the diety there, he sighted a cave at a distance. Siddharudha went there and saw a Brahmin having strange things with him, making strange gesticulations with his limbs and muttering some thing. He asked him what he was doing. He replied

that he was doing some practices for attaiment of certain powers like mesmerism. Then Siddharudha told him, "O, man you are born as a Brahmin. A Brahmin is one who knows Brahman. Instead of living up to that name, you are indulging in activities for the attainment of this mean result. What is the benefit you are going to gain out of it? What you would get from it is short lived. By attaining such powers you are only giving way for sin and you have to reap the result of the sin".

Even those who perform the rites enjoined by Scriptures and attain heaven as a result of their meritorious deeds have to come back on the termination of merit[1]. Again starts karma, again rebirth to reap the fruit of karma. There is no escape from birth and death[2]. Try to acquire self knowledge and eternal bliss". The Brahmin got into a mood of repentence. He said, "The person who taught me this lore did not tell me the defect inherent in it". The Swamiji pointed out to him that it was his mistake to have accepted the discipleship without examining the teacher. The Brahmin asked him what he should do to get rid of this defect and to have his mind purified. Sri Siddharudha said "You have been initiated into GAYATRI hymn. Repeat it twenty-four thousand times a day. This will purify your

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1 क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति । 2 जायस्व म्रियस्व ।

mind and you will be able to find a preceptor". The Brahmin fell at his feet.

In this manner, Siddharudha toured the entire Bharath and arrived at Bijapur and stayed there for some days. He served the nectar of Self knowledge to those who came to him. The news that he was a realised Soul spread far and wide. Those who had faith in God and who were eagar to have knowledge of the Self came to him and got all their doubts resolved. Sometimes the conduct of Siddharudha looked like that of a lunatic. He had the eyes, but he would not see. He had the ears, but he would not hear. He had the month, but he would not speak. He was not conscious of the external world. He revelled within himself. Once he went for alms in YADAWAD and stood in front of a house. The house-wife brought a roti and gave it to him. There was a little curry on the roti. He said that the curry was not enough to apply to the Roti. There upon, the house-wife applied the same curry to the entire roti. Then Siddha said, "All has become curry. There is no Roti to break". Thinking that he was a lunatic, the lady went inside the house. Vidyaranya has stated in his work PANCHADASI that the enlightened person walks about in the world as a blind, dull and dumb person*.

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* अन्धवज्जडवच्चैव मूकवच्च महीं चरेत् ।।

– 7 –

"प्रारब्धन्त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् "

(Reap the fruit of your past deeds and stay in a state of identity with the Supreme)

Siddharudha Swamy toured in different parts of the country as a wandering mendicant and reached Hubli. During the days of his journey he underwent great difficulties. Besides hunger and thirst, he had to suffer other affictions-bodily and mental. Emaciated body, beggar's looks, silence natural to an ascetic-all these factors produced feelings of indifference, insult and contempt towards him in the minds of ignorant people bound by SAMSARA. This of course is not surprising. Some knocked him down. The knees got hurt and bleeded. They thrashed him taking him for a thief. The body tattered. They abused him and humiliated him. His mind was afflicted. But the intellect accepted all that. Whom do the thrashes and humiliations affect? They applied to the physical body which has come down as a result of balance of past karma, and to the mind. His Self was ever pure, enlightened and unbound. He was not affected by anything because he knew for certain that the body, mind and intellect are not the Self. It was his confirmed opinion that the body, senses and mind are not the Self. Can the afflictions of this illusory world go any where near him whose mind was always steeped in the Supreme Brahman and experienced his identity with the ultimate characterised by "SAT-CHIT-

ANANDA?. He was a realised person who was one with the Supreme Brahman, moving about in the world undergoing his PRARABDHA.

He camped near the well of one Sri TORAVI in the vicinity of Hubli. It seems some boys there informed one MADALETAPPA, a rich man of Vaisya community, that a saint had come there. The rich man came and saw Siddharudha. He felt that the Swamiji was a great man, took him home and gave him bath, food and clothing. After food he arranged for his bed and went out on his duty. When he returned he saw that the Swamiji had gone away leaving behind the new cloth he had given, wearing KOUPEENAM. The Vaisya, thinking that persons who have renounced everything are not after the sensual pleasures and remained quiet. Coming to know this, a good householder by name Gurulinga Sastry went to him along with some devotees, asked him questions on Vedanta and was satisfied with the replies. This was going on. Siddharudha was becoming famous in Hubli. Discourses on YOGAVASISHTA were going on in the residence of KSHEERASAGARA Basavannappa. One day Gurulinga Sastry, addressing the Swamiji said, "Venerable sir, I have a question for clarification. You say that the Self is always residing in the body, pervading every where and that there is no place where he does not exist. If so, why do we not see him?". Siddharudha replied "If an object is to be seen, it should have a form. It should have a shape. ATMAN

has neither form nor shape. It has none of the qualities of sound, touch, shape, taste and smell-says the Upanishad"[1]. Therefore he cannot be comprehended by the sense organs-not only by the eye but also by any sensory organ".

The dialogue continued between the two;

Sastry-If so what is the evidence for the existence of ATMAN?

Siddharudha-The evidence is Veda itself. Hundreds of statements like "ATMAN should be heard and understood"[2], clearly declare that ATMAN exists. Besides, every one knows and says "I am". No one thinks "I am not". Who is that "I"? If you go on inquiring into it, you will come to the conclusion that "I" does not belong to the body or to the senses and that it is beyond all these.

Sastry- It is said that the ATMAN is not within the comprehension of the word and the mind. How is this possible?

Siddharudha-True; Upanishad says, "From where both the words and the mind recede without grasping"[3]. This means that the nature of ATMAN cannot be described by words nor can the mind grasp it. Every word we speak tells us about the characteristics, quality and action of an object and we get to know the object thereby. For instance, consider

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1 अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययम् ।   2"आत्मा वा अरे श्रोतव्यः" इति श्रुतिः ।

3 यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

the words man, animal, tree etc. If you point to a man and say 'He say he is a man', you can at once say on seeing any other person that he is a man. How is this possible? All men possess the same characteristics. Similarly, the animal, tree etc. possess their own individual characteristics. By this it is possible to know to which class all objects belong- whether it is man, animal or tree. Words like whitenes, blackness etc. tell the quality. Words like teacher, cook etc. indicate action. Rama,Krishna, Siva are known as words of allusion. Allusion does not come within the ambit of class, quality or action. If you point to a person and say, "He is Lingiah" we get to know only that person. We will not be able to identify any other person. ATMAN has no class, no quality, no action. This being the case, by which word can he be familiarised?

Sastry-Does not the mind grasp him?

Siddharudha- No, what cannot be described by word, cannot be comprehended by the mind.

Sastry- We are told that ATMAN can be known after the mind is purified. If ATMAN cannot be seen by the mind what else can grasp it? How does Self-knowledge dawn? What is the relation between mind, purification and Self knowledge?

Siddharudha-Listen to this. ATMAN is self-luminous. He shines by himself. He is himself the shining lamp. You need light to see the pot, the house and the tree. You dont need light to see light. Desire, anger etc are the impurities in the mind. If they go

away it means mind purification. Such a purified mind can grasp the teachings of the preceptor. The purified mind paves the way to development of interest in listening to scriptures, recapitulation and constant musing. By continuous practice in this manner, the mind conveys the soul towards the Supreme, and pointing to the Supreme, leaves him at that. The soul then realises "I am verify the Brahman". This realisation is Self-knowledge.

Gurulinga Sastry was greatly influenced by this valuable teaching of Siddharudha. It became definite that the begger was not an ordinary man and that he was an enlightened being. With the advance of time, the reputation of Siddharudha began to spread in Hubli. People came to know some-how that he belonged to the Lingayat community. But he was not wearing Linga. When his Guru Gajadanda Swamy taught him the nature of ATMAN, he had removed the Linga and surrendered it in his very presence saying that it was ridiculous that ATMAN who has no caste or clan should wear the Linga. The sages have said that God resides in the hearts of the saints[1]. According to this, when Shiva is pervading every where and is residing in the heart, where is the need for exhibition of this external symbol? This was his stand. But how can the ignorant understand the mind of the enlightened? When he removed the Linga, many

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[1] योगिनां हृदये हरिः ।

people condisdered him to be a non-believer fit to be treated with contempt. Further some obstinate people who were blinded by narrow caste considerations even thrashed him and subjected him to a variety of tortures. Probably the tortures and humiliations meted out to him in Hubli were not experienced by him in any part of India. Despite these hardships, he did not make up his mind to leave that place. Though it is not possible to say what exactly were the reasons for it, we may do some guess-work and say;

1. He had given up all bodily attachments. Therefore respect or disrespect and tortures inflieted on him did not come to his notice at all.
2. He might have thought that through this the result of past deeds gets wiped out early.
3. He must have felt that he had already wandered for many years in the distant places, that he should stop his movement and that in case he were to get a band of disciples, he should work for their spiritual advancement by providing proper guidance.
4. He must have decided to settle there for the good of the pious people in the city and to achieve his ultimate aim of the well being of mankind.

When Siddharudha came to Hubli, he was about forty years as he himself has once stated. After coming to Hubli, he went to a place called DUMAGERI nearby. There was a tomb of a Brahmin ascetic by name CHIDGHANANANDA SWAMY. A plat-form under a neem-tree which existed there became his

living place. All round the place, trees, bushes and creepers had grown presenting the looks of a forest. He was satisfying his hunger with the alms collected in the village. Devotees started gathering even there. By and by, a building too came up by the power of the enlightened person. Among those who were coming to him seeking knowledge, there were Brahmins, Parsis, Jains, Lingayats and people belonging to other faiths. The building, which was constructed by the combined effort of all of them, is now well-known as Sree Siddharudha Math.

This enlightened person had to face many hurdles and afflictions. The suffering he had to undergo at the hands of some jealous and ignorant people and those who were blinded by caste feelings and who dubbed him as a heretic was enormous. But what does it matter? Does not the sun rise even when he is covered by mist? Does not the moon grow in the bright half of the month even if the foxes are yelling? Does the ocean dry up if the water is thrown out by hand? Does not the holy fig-tree grow sky-high even if we do not want? Does the King elephant give way to animals which come in front of it and shout? Does the river Ganges stop flowing towards the ocean even if she is asked not to flow? The reputation of Siddharudha as a realised soul spread every where. The chariot which carried Siddharudha decked with golden crown moved in the same street in which he was going with his begging bowl earlier.

In the place where Siddharudha Math stands at present, there was a mere pandal. It was there that Siddharudha was giving discourses. His discourses started attracting people. The number grew from ten to hundred, hundred to thousand and thousand to ten thousand. The devotees started coming from neighbouring villages and from different towns. The pandal grew into a math. Arrangement was made for serving food to the visitors and to the poor and forlorn. Not only did the math grow but the city of Hubli also grew and became famous.

The car festival with the Godess Gowri seated in the chariot took place in Hubli on the Gouri Full Moon day. On account of some unknown reason, a quarrel broke out once in the community. At last it was decided that the festival should be carried on with Siddharudha seated in the chariot. The consent of Siddharudha was obtained and with Siddharudha seated in the chariot, the festival was put through. Then onwards, this car festival came to be known as the fare of Hubli and it began to be celebrated every year. People began to pour in large numbers. The growth of Hubli and the spread of its reputation was due to the spiritual power of Siddharudha. The realised person of Hubli attained the glory of becoming the realised person of Bharath.

"न रत्नमन्विष्यति मृग्यते हि तत् "

(The Jewel does not go after people. It is saught after by people themselves)

As the followers of Siddharudha swelled, the mutt also grew. People started coming in thousands every day to listen to his discourses. Among them, there were learned men, intelligent citizens, those eager to know as well as those with blind devotion. They had no desire for knowledge. What they wanted was earthly gain. Such a state of affairs is natural in any math or organisation. Let us leave it at that.

KABIR DAS

One day during the course of the talk a muslim youth came and fell at the feet of Siddharudha. To the enquiry as to who he was, he replied "Venerable sir, I do not know who I am. It is only to know that I have come and surrendered to you. I have gone to many different Maths. I have not been admitted by any of them because I am a muslim. I have developed great desire for Self-knowledge. Kindly give me shelter and elevate me". The Swamiji thought, "He appears to be seriously interested in Self-knowledge. Let me see." He asked him to stay on and arranged every thing for his stay in the math. The Swamiji who was greatly impressed by his pure heart, devotion for the Guru, and his longing for knowledge of the Supreme, named him "Kabir Das".

The muslim youth had studied Sanskrit well. He knew music. His earlier name was Syed Ameen. He belonged to Bellary. It seems he was related to the Nawab of Hyderabad. He wore gold rings on all the ten fingers. As he was from royal family, he was not wanting in money. It is indeed surprising how a person placed in that position could develop interest in Indian philosophy and detachment in life. There was another Kabirdas earlier who was a great devotee of Lord Ramachandra. He is not existing now.

Gradually Kabir Das got a respectable position in the math. He came to be counted as a close disciple of Siddharudha Swamy. Where ever the Swamiji went, Kabirdas should be there. The situation reached a stage that without him nothing could take place. He held no office. He was a great devotee who believed that service of the Guru is the highest posititions. The guru's hand of compassion was always on his head. The number of visitors to have Guru's "DARSAN" went on increasing. The duty of regulating the visitors whenever it became necessary fell on Kabir. He could talk to the visitors and allow them to have the `darsan' if it was absolutely necessary.

Once a certain individual came with all pride seeking to see the Swamiji and to know what his understanding was about NADA (Sound), BINDU(Point) and KALA (Digit). When the visitor expressed his intention, Kabir slapped him on his

cheek. The visitor screamed. Tears rolled down from his eyes. He asked, "Is it proper to slap me on my cheek when I came to know Swamiji's replies to my point?". Kabir said in reply, "You shouted when I hit you. That is NADA, Each drop of tear which rolled from your eyes is it BINDU. The scar left on your cheek is KALA. What is it that you know to test Guruji? One who has no means to buy a stack of grass should not go to buy gold and precious gems !"

On one occasion a scholar belonging to MADHWA community came to Siddharudha and said, "You speak of Brahman as having no quality and no action. Is it possible for such an object to exist? How does it look like?" At that time, Kabir was bathing. The swamiji called him aloud by name. At once Kabir threw away the bathing vessel and came running and stood there in complete nudity. The Swamiji turned towards the Madhwa scholar and pointing to Kabir said, "Look, Brahman whom I refer to will be like this". He threw a cloth at Kabir and asked him to wipe his body. Many people were intolerant towards Kabir. "This fellow is a muslim and is parading in this math with pride and glory. He is moving about in rich clothing and golden rings in all splendour". This was their charge against Kabir. Being jealous of him, they carried tales against him. This was of no avail. Siddharudha was treating Kabir with the same affection through out. One day a few people of Hubli came to the Swamiji

and said, “This Kabir is very arrogant. He is parading in royal dignity. On the other hand you have renounced every thing. You do not wear even a proper sheet of cloth on your body. You are satisfied with a Koupeena. Kabir does not deserve to stay in this Self less math. Throw him out”. Thinking that he should teach them a lesson, the Swamiji called Kabir. At once Kabir came and stood before him. The Swamiji gave him the cloth on his shoulder and asked him to leave the math with the cloth on without a second word. Kabir removed all his dress, took out the rings from his fingers and placed them on the ground, prostrated to the Guru and set out wearig the cloth given by the Guru. This created confusion in the math. The devotees came running from the market place. No one knew what exactly was the matter. Some people brought new clothes and offered, and put a golden chain around his neck. He felt that he was being called back by Siddharudha. He returned to the math and fell at the feet of the Guru. Even then the jealous people were not satisfied. They levelled the charge against him that he went with a single cloth on and returned in royal garb. In reply to this, Siddharudha said “Sir, he is from royal family. He feels that he should have it. I am not after it. A piece of cloth to wear and another to wrap will be enough for me. Formerly I wore a Koupeena. Now I wrap myself with a cloth for your sake. Lord Krishna was a connoisseur. Sage Suka had renounced every thing. Both Sree Rama and Janaka

were kings. Sage Vasishtha was devoted to Vedic rites. All of them were enlightened beings. Why do you see the exterior? See the interior of Kabir. It is spotless as a mirror !".

Once the relatives of Kabir came to Hubli and spotted Kabir. They told him that the settlement of property worth Lakhs of Rupees was pending and asked him to go to his place and attend to it and then he would be a free bird. Kabir went to Siddharudha and asked him what he should do. The Swamiji said "Kabir, you have vomitted all wealth and came here. Why do you take it to your mouth again?" Kabir never went to his place. That was the stead-fastness of his faith in his Guru. He was telling the devotees, "O! fortunate ones !, pearls, diamonds and precious stones are dropping from his mouth. Gather them and treasure them. Never again you will get such an occasion".

There was a set back in Kabir's health. His end drew near. No treatment gave him relief. His sister and other relatives came to take him to their place. They were struck with wonder to see him wearing sacred ash and a garland of rosaries. He did not agree to go back to his place. The relatives met Siddharudha and requested him to send Kabir. The Swamiji said, "I did not ask him to come here. He has come by his own volition. Nothing prevents him from going. In case he agrees you may take him". Kabir did not go. They went back.

Kabir cast off his mortal frame on the 1st of December 1915. He was laid to rest behind the math. Siddharudha placed his benevolent hand on the head of this great devotee and burst into tears saying, "Kabir, I commited a blunder by building this math. I should not have involved myself in worldly affairs. My desire was to turn the people towards the ultimate Truth to show them the path to reach Divinity and there by free them from the fetters of SAMSARA. Scared by SAMSARA I left home only to get myself entangled in a bigger SAMSARA. The only relieving factor is that I have been able to feed the hungry souls of your sort".

A certain devotee, who had seen the Swamiji lamenting, opened the subject on a later occasion and asked him, "You shed tears when Kabir died. Does an enlighetened person lament? Are they affected by happiness and sorrow?" Siddharudha replied, "As long as the body exists, the functions of the body do not cease completely. Even the enlightened person has hunger, thirst, sleep. In respect of wicked things he exercises control fully. He does not allow freedom to the mind. If it is not a wicked matter, remains indifferent. He does not try to exercise control. Can there be any one who will not shed tears for a devotee like Kabir?"

SISUNAL SHARIFF

A group of persons from Shishunal set out for having DARSAN of Siddharudha. The group had the

famous Shariff also with it. Shariff had a great reputation as a man of knowledge and a poet of folk-lore. Besides he was a thinker and philosopher. After they arrived at Hubli, shariff asked his men to bring two coconuts saying that one should not go to great people with empty hands and proceeded towards the math. A disciple was collecting flowers for worship from a flower garden opposite to the room in which Siddharudha was residing. Shariff too was collecting flowers and was throwing them away after smelling them. Flowers once smelt are not to be used for worship. The disciple therefore asked, “Venerable Shariff, why are you smelling the flowers and throwing them away? They are being wasted. They are required for our Swamijis worship”. Shariff then said, “Your Guru stated that Brahman is above quality and beyond words. What worship can be offered to such a God? If the ascetics who have renounced every thing have such glamour towards flowers what should be the degree of glamour for house-holders like us?”

Siddharudha came to know about the conversation between Shariff and the disciple of the math. and that very subject was taken up for the days discourse. Shariff was also present in the assembly. Siddharudha's analysis of the subject was on these lines. “The Supreme being is without quality, action and point. It is still and exists for all times and is the Supreme joy. It is called ‘SAT’ because it stands for ever without being affected by the past, present and

future. It is therefore spoken of as SAT, CHIT, ANANDA". It created this world by its power of MAYA as with quality. There is nothing impossible for MAYA to achieve. The quality that we find in Iswara is not real. It is some thing imagined. In this world, with quality all forms of Dualism are seen. The worshipper, the worshipped and the worship-these triplets do exist in this world of Dualism. These triplets are present in any action that we think of. Eating is an act. For this act to take place, there should be an eater and the thing to be consumed. This means there are three entities- the act of eating, the person who eats and the item eaten. The moment 'action' is thought of Duality follows and Brahman ceases to be Non-dualistic. That is why it is said to be 'Actionless'. But does not action exist in this world? Yes, it does exist. Who can deny it? But the question is how did Dualism make its appearance in Non-dualism? The reply is that the world is illusory and hence Dualism sets in. The knowledge of Non-dualism does not dawn all on a sudden. One should do constant practice. The Guru should be worshipped and he should be won over. The Guru too should come down to teach with a Dualistic attitude. Even teaching is an act. One should be in Dualism and try to reach the level of Non-dualism. Then the flower is there, Shariff is there and the disciple is there. The Guru can be worshipped with the flower. The Guru stands aloof as a witness and will be observing the Triplet". Being a wiseman,

Shariff was fully satisfied with the reply given by Siddharudha. As he was a poet who could compose without notice, he came out with a verse on Siddharudha instantaneously in Kannada commencing with the line "Look, here is a great sage". All people in the assembly were overjoyed.

LOKA MANYA TILAK

Lokamanya Balagangadhara Tilak is a well known person as a philosopher and a patriot. He had made a deep study of both Indian and Western Systems of philosophy. He was imprisoned for a period of six years in Mandale Jail in connection with his participation in Freedom movement. During this period, he wrote a book on the Song Divine Bhagavad Geeta under the title "GEETA RAHASYA". A study of this work reveals the depth and vastness of his scholarship. He was in agreement with Non-dualistic philosophy alone. But he did not agree with the path of ascetisim propounded by Sankara in his commentary on GEETA. It is his stand that Lord Krishna has preached in the GEETA that even the enlightened have to keep performing the duty for the sake of the well being of the World. Tilak held fast to the statements, "Your jurisdiction extends only up to performance of duty. Therefore you have to perform duty*", appearing in the Geeta and has argued in his GEETA RAHASYA that it is the conclusion of the

* ``कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते'' ``कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वम् ।''

song Divine that it is obligatory on the part of even the enlightened, to keep on performing the duties in the manner laid down in the scriptures. He does not say that the path of asceticism is wrong. The essence of his agrgument is that there are two independant courses for the enlightened to follow and what the GEETA says is stead-fast adherence duty.

The traditional pundits did not accept this argument. A School master came to Sri Siddharudha Swamiji in order to know his views on this subject and placed the exposition of Tilak in "GEETA RAHASYA" before him. Siddharudha examined the statement of Tilak and gave his decision thus, "Tilak's argument is like the argument of an advocate in a court of law. True, it is an exhibition of scholar-ship. But the fact is not that, The enlightened has no duty what -so-ever, TILAK has not studied at the feet of a Guru". Probably Siddharudha's statement might have appeared in the news paper. However this matter went to the notice of the Lokamanya. He wondered whether Siddharudha could have said it and decided to come to Hubli in order to find out the truth or otherwise of it. By this, we can imagine the extent to which the fame of Siddharudha had spread.

It was a great news that Tilak was visiting Hubli. Patriotic people arranged his talks. The British Government ruling the country issued a notice to the Lokamanya that no talk should be given in the limits

of Hubli Municipality. The organisers fixed that the lecture should be conducted outside the Municipal limts. Who is to preside over the meeting? No doubt there were suitable persons in Hubli. But no body came forward perhaps because they feared going against Government. Some people went to Siddharudha and requested him to preside over the lecture meeting. He readily agreed saying, "There is nothing to fear. I am not afraid of any one. It is the duty of every Indian to fight for the nation. I am an Indian. The internal enemies like lust and hatred should be conquered. The external enemies namely the foreigners too should be faced. Without independance our Indian culture will not survive". This throws light on the large heartedness of Siddharudha.

The assembly took place under the chairmanship of Siddharudha. Tilak arrived at the math with the Swamiji. He told the Swamiji the purpose of his visit. It is said that a protracted discussion followed. Siddharudha had a good knowledge of MARATI. Therefore, there was no language problem. He told, what he had already told the Marata scholar with a little more elaboration thus. "There are no two courses for attaining emancipation. Only one path is available and that is the path of knowledge[1] and not the path of duty".

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[1] ज्ञानादेव तु कैवल्यम् ।

The learned have said that we should be performing the duty for purification of the mind and not for attainment of the Supreme[1]. You too agree with this. Your opinion is divided as to whether duty is to be performed or given up when once the ATMAN is realised. We too accept that all need not become ascetics. Even Sankara has not said anything to that effect. He has laid stress on SANYAS because a SANYASIN will be better able to practice quietude and restraint over the senses. The triplet vanishes after Brahman is realised. Everything is seen as Brahman. The feeling "I am the doer" gets erased. For one who has attained fulfillment, nothing remains to be done. What for is it to be done? You say it is for the well being of the world. In the view of the enlightened nothing like the world exists. It is true that king Janaka and others were performing KARMA though they were enlightened. But in the view of king Janaka, it was not Karma at all. When one is Brahman itself, the prescription of "Do's and Dont's" does not apply. Who can dictate Brahman either to do or not to do ? The Geeta statements "Your jurisdiction is upto Karma only. Therefore do your duty", were meant to Arjuna. He was not a realised being. One who is not enlightened has to perform duty for purification of mind. Duty and devotion are means to Self knowledge. You are uniformly applying to the generality as a

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[1] ``चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म नतु वस्तूपलब्धये । "

whole, what was exclusively meant for Arjuna. It is here that you have erred. Sankara toured through out the country and wrote commentaries and other works. From the points of view of the people, all that is Karma. This being the case how do you say that he has stuffed into GEETA his own thinking, just because he advocated the path of an ascetic? Lord Krishna was a Yogin. Sage Suka was a Tyagi and a wanderer. Sree Rama and Janaka were Kings. Sage Vasistha had firm faith in KARMA. All of them were enlightened. Therefore the sum and substance is that an enlightened being remains only in the path of knowlege and the KARMA he performs is not Karma at all. You have started to interpret Vedanta through logic from the knowledge gained by study of books. Sir, you have not studied in the manner prescribed by tradition. Self knowlege is obtained only through the preceptor, says the Upanishad". It is only a self realised person who can express Truth courageously and no one else. It is not known what stand Tilak took thereafter. He praised Siddharudha as an enlightened person without reservation and went away. Attracted by the reputation of Siddharudha Swamy, Vivekananda and Shivananda of Hrishikesh visited him and had his blessing.

Even kings ordinary and great, were going to Siddharudha for his 'darsan'. Pontiffs of Veerasaiva maths as well as several saints were also going to him. Brahmin Scholars, Parsis, Jains and other people interested in knowledge came to him for resolution

of their doubts and returned fully satisfied with his replies. Seshachala Swamy of AGADI too had visited him.

GONDAVALI BRAHMA CHAITANYA

There is another beautiful incident to be narrated here. Who does not know the greatness of Brahma Chaitanya of Gondavali? He was known by the name Ganapati in his boyhood. He was initiated into Rama Nama by his parents, who were devotees of Sree Rama at the time of his thread ceremony. Even from boyhood Ganapati was an introvert and was deeply involved in meditation. He left home when he was fifteen and went in search of Guru just as Siddharudha did. He went to a great man by name Tukaram Chaitanya and became his disciple. Chaitanya Swamy examined him by putting him to hard tests. One day he called him and said. "Ganapati, your mind has become pure. God's grace is on your head. You are blessed. There is nothing that you need learn here after. Hence forward, you will become famous under the name `Brahma Chaitanya'. You will have my blessings". It is he who came to be known as Gondavali Brahma Chaitanya. Once he came to Hubli to see Siddharudha and entered the precints of the math. Siddharudha went to welcome him. The two held each other in fast embrace. Siddharudha took him to the math, seated him in his own seat and served him. Addressing Siddharudha, Brahma Chaitanya said "This body of mine will be

repeating the name 'Rama' always. I preach the same to those who desire Self knowledge. Is it a proper advice? Please let me know your view". Siddharudha replied "Nothing is greater than meditating on the divine name. The name `Rama' is hailed as the sacred hymn which can take the devotee across worldly miseries. The Puranas say that even Lord Shiva has `Ramanama' for meditation. The name Rama signifies the Self rejoicing force which pervades in all beings. The essence of household life is the meditation on Rama. I too do the same. It is for the upliftment of the world that you are preaching `Rama Japa'. Is there a duty greater than this that saints are to do?" Brahma Chaithanya was over-joyed to hear it. Only great men can understand the great. Brahma Chaitanya was saying that Sri Siddharudha was the incarnation of Gnaneswara. Siddharudha believed that Brahma Chaitanya was the incarnation of SAMARTHA RAMADAS. It should be remembered here that Siddharudha was born on the ninth day of the bright half of the commencing month of the lunar year in the constellation `Punarvasu' which corresponds to the day on which sree Rama was born.

In this way several great people were coming to Siddharudha for his 'Darsan'.

"ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः "

(Only Brahman is real - The world is unreal. verily the Soul is Brahman - Nothing else)

This settled doctrine of Non-dualistic philosophy is well known. Here, all accept the statement that Brahman is real. There is no difference of opinion when the supreme being is described as real and eternal. Reference to the world as unreal is the point disputed. Other philosophers do not accept this. It is hard to explain this clearly for any one, however learned he may be. Siddharudha believed in the Absolute-Monism expounded by Sankara and propogated by him. The vital aspect of the explanation of Monism is in establishing the unreal nature of the world. Though this is the essence of the entire gamut of the Upanishads, it is indeed very difficult to explain to the people in a way that their mind grasps it. For this one has to depend on reasoning and proper illustration. The process of reasoning is quite acceptable in coming to conclusions in respect of topics relating to Veda. It is now necessary to know how Siddharudha was explaining the unreal nature of the world. Unfortunately the teachings of Siddharudha are not available in their proper form. But in the Commemoration volume published in 1993 by Siddharudha math of Hubli, under the title "Arudha Darsana", there is a write up by Sri Dayananda Saraswati with the caption "Jagadguru Siddharudha's view on logic in Scriptures", where in he has shown

how Siddharudha was elucidating the subject of the unreal nature of the world. I felt that this article deserves frequent rumination and that I should give the gist of the same and hence have attempted it here. The exposition of Siddharudha is as follows-

"This world is just imaginary. If it is real,it would have been possible to say where it came from and when. It does not exist as it is not present in the Absolute. It is not non-existent because it is being experienced. It is said to be inexplicable. The world is experienced by the ignorant and not by the enlightened. All have accepted the world and are carrying on with the affairs, on this account, is it proper to say that there are no enlightened people at all in this world? The enlightened do exist. They do not conduct their affairs with the conviction that the world is real. A clerk behaves as if the shop is his own. But he is aware that the shop does not belong to him. Like wise though the enlightened person knows that the world is not real he conducts him self as if it is real".

"What is world? we must say that all that we see before us is the world. We can as well say that what we see in the dream state is the world. But when we come back to waking state that world does not exist at all. It is within the experience of all that the dream world is unreal. How are we to say that which is experienced is real? If we say that the world has name, form and action, it means that we have accepted that

the collection of name, form and action is the world. Then the question arises whether the collection and the parts are the same or different. If they are different then the world which is the collection will have no independent identity apart from name, form and action. Therefore it would not be proper to say that it is different. If it is to be treated as the same, the world should figure in the name, the form and the action. But it is not so in the actual dealings. Therefore it has to be explained as beyond description. Because it is beyound description, it is unreal".

If so, bondage, liberation and the Veda which expounds liberation have also to be termed unreal. Have we not accepted that all things which are seen to be opposed to Brahman are unreal? A positive 'yes' is the answer to this question. If we accept that ATMAN is also bound by SAMSARA is true, then there is no destruction to the bondage at all. In such a situation, one may have to say that there is no liberation at all because, that which is real is imperishable and if it is perishable it is not real. Likewise if liberation is be acquired afresh, then the liberated person may have to take birth again, because liberation becomes impermanent. That which is born should have an end. Therefore there is no question of bondage and liberation. ATMAN is always in a state of liberation. It is his illusion that makes him think that he is bound. This is due to ingnorance. Disappearance of this illusion is itself liberation".

"In the state of liberation there is neither Veda nor

Scripture[1]. This has been proclaimed by Veda itself. In the Absolute state, bondage,liberation, Scripture - all become myth. The Scriptures are there for the sake of those who are under the illusion that the world and bondage are real. There is a maxim that the offering should be according to the nature of the spirit[2]. In the same way the ignorant needs Scriptures. All those who have not experienced that "Brahman is real and the world is unreal" are in fact disillusioned".

The next is the statement, "Only the Soul is Brahman. He is not different from the Supreme Being"[3]. Let us now consider how Siddharudha was expounding it.

"There are serveral people who believe that the world is real. For their Sake, systems of philosphy like SANKHYA have come to being. All those are works on Dualism. The 'Dwaitins' accept the five classes of differences. They say that differences exist between soul and soul, inert and inert, Supreme and inert, the soul and the Supreme and the soul and the inert. The 'Adwaitins' do not accept this. The reason for these five forms of differences, which are only apparent, is illusion. This illusion has been described as 'ignorance' and 'superimposition' by the authors of Scriptures. Truth does not reveal itself unless the mind is purified. Purification of mind is necessary to know things as they are. The difference in Jeevas like "I, You, He" is imposed and does not exist. The space

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1``यत्र वेदाः अवेदाः भवन्ति । 2 यक्षानुरूपो बलिः ।
3 ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ।

is one and the same. But by superimposition it appears different in the house, the math, the pot and the cloth. In the space at home the affairs of the world take place. The affairs of the math are conducted in the space inside the math, and in the space available in the pot water is filled and brought. In the same manner the differences, such as "the boy and the aged", "man and woman", the good and the wicked, are due to superimposition of body and not due to the ATMAN being different. Just as the space is the same, so too ATMAN is the same. "THE ATMAN" is every where and eternal as the space"[1] say the Scriptures. The space in the pot looks smaller than the space in the math owing to the differences in the'UPADHI'. In the same way, differences are seen by which one man is happy and another is miserable, one is sickly and another is healthy. They are related to UPADHI and not to ATMAN. That is why one is liberated the other remains bound. There is no substance in the proposition that if one is liberated all may have to be liberated. The Adwaita says that all are liberated beings and that there is none who is bound. It is ignorance which should be destroyed and not the bondage. One, whose UPADHI, which is the mind, is annihilated by the knowledge of 'I am Brahman' by which ignorance disappears, is the liberated person. Others do not become free from bondage. When the pot is broken, the space in the pot is released, and not the space inside another pot. Similarly, if one is happy, another may be miserable. Nothing prevents it".

1 आकाशवत् सर्वगतश्च नित्यः ।

"By these illustrations, we can accept that there is no difference between Jeeva and Jeeva. Now how about the absense of difference between the individual soul and the Supreme? The individual soul is stained by the fruit of past deed. He is ignorant. The Supreme is not defiled by any Karma. He is all powerful and all knowing. The Knowledge of the individual Soul is limited. The question remains that his power too is very limited. It is met by this. The difference between Jeeva and Jeeva is due to UPADHI. So too is the difference between the individual and the Supreme. In fact the Supreme being himself resides in the body with the name Jeevatman. The Scripture emphatically has asserted that after creating the body, the Supreme being himself entered it in the form of Jeeva[1] the all knowing and all powerfulness are and eclipsed. The stain of karma is to the mind which is the UPADHI and not to ATMAN. UDDALAKA preached his son SWETAKETU; "THOU ART THAT"[2] nine times. Why nine times ? He has to say it nine times because it is a hard subject and hence will not elicit faith if told once".

"This is very difficult to grasp because ignorance is deep rooted in us. If we keep listening to Scriptures, ruminating on what is heard and frequently meditating on it, the mind is purified. Then by the power of instruction of the teacher, truth will be realised. Practice is necessary. Faith is needed. Absence of faith

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[1] अनेन जीवेन आत्मना अनुप्रविश्य `तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् '

[2] `तत्त्वमसि' [3] ``छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः....तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ।"

and practice give rise to doubts of this sort. When the nature of ATMAN is clearly understood, all misgivings are rent asunder[3]. Scholars have proved the issue of the difference between the individual soul and the Supreme.

The one-ness of Brahman and the inert world should not be taken to mean Brahman itself has become the world. Brahman has not become any thing. The world is only apparent by mis-conception. This is what it means. There is no existence for the world with out Brahman. The basis for the world is Brahman. It is possible to mis-construe a 'rope for the serpent'. This is referred to as the maxim of 'rope and serpent'. The rope will not be the serpent. The rope will be there as it is. It is seen as the serpent by illusion. Apart from the rope, there is no serpent. By this people may say that there is no difference between the rope and the serpent. However the rope will not become serpent. Similarly Brahman does not transform itself as the world. Therefore the conclusion ofNon-dualism alone is the Truth. The Vedas and Scriptures have stated accordingly. The same will be the personal experience of the realised person. What is personally experienced has to be accepted. There is only one thing called Brahman and a second does not exist[1].

In this manner Siddharudha was explaining his experiences to his disciples lucidly.

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1 ``एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म ।"

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``अर्थमनर्थं भावय नित्यम् "

(Consider wealth as disastrous)

Wealth is called ARTHA because it is 'sought after' (ARTHYATHE) by all. The world has found out long ago that it is disastrous. Saints have gone on preaching this from times immemorial, People too have been listening to it from one ear and letting it out from the other. Such is the magnitude of lust for wealth. The belief among people that wealth gives happiness is so intense. When does it prove disastrous? It proves disastrous when accumulation of wealth is far in excess of the need.

The devotees who came to know the greatness of Siddarudha, made liberal contributions to the math. Huge permanent assets were built. Moveable assets like gold and silver were also collected in large measure. By that, Siddharudha's happiness neither shot up nor diminished. He was in the same State, deriving happiness from within. The Self rejoicing which was gushing forth spontaneously when he was wandering in the woods with hunger, continued to remain in the same condition unaffected by the changed circumstances.

When Siddharudha came to Hubli, one by name UJJANNAVARA BHEEMAPPA was serving him. His wife was Lakshmavva. Both of them were god

fearing. They served Siddharudha with devotion. It may not be inconsistent to say that this couple is responsible for Siddharudha's settlement in Hubli. They were childless. They had adopted one by name Siddhappa whose wife was Parvatamma. A male child was born to Siddhappa and Parvatamma. The child was named Gurunatha thinking that they got it as a result of the blessing of the Guru. They used to call him by the name Gurappa. Siddharudha had great affection for him. Seeing his auspecious marks, he had desired that Gurunatha should succeed him. This happened and he became well known as "Sree Gurunatharudha".

This is what is to be said at this juncture. The Siddharudha math grew. It was full of wealth, gold and other materials. It is undisputed that all these came from the devotees. The math and its assets belonged to the public. While this was the sitution, people from the side of Gurappa's father cast their greedy eyes on the assets of the math. Though it is surprising that the wicked thought of taking control over the assets of the math entered their mind, it is not uncommon. The saying that 'there is fear for the wealthy even from the son'* is quite true. From what is going to be narrated later, it becomes amply evident that these people were responsible for the disaster that overtook the math. There may be yet another reason for this.

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* पुत्रादपि धनभाजां भीतिः ।

The people visiting the math were mostly Lingayats. So those belonging to other communities might have felt that the math should not go into the hands of the Lingayats. Among those who felt like this and tried for it, the important person is one by name Choncha Siddhaiah. He too was a Lingayat. Thus in regard to the assets of the math, two opposing factions came up. The first faction, which came to being out of selfish motive, got into action. Then came to being the second faction which wanted that the math should become public property.

Whoever may be the individuals, that is not relevant. The story of the disaster that took place is this. A Will was got written by Siddharudha to the effect that the entire math was his private property, that it should pass on to Gurappa after his death, and that he could dispose of the property according to his fancy. The Will was got signed. The conspiracy of the Selfish persons could not be seen by that great Soul who was always an introvert. As he was signing all the routine papers of the math, he affixed his signature to the Will without asking any thing. The Will was registered on the first of May, 1924 in great secrecy. After two years, the secret some how came to light. Then the second faction took birth under the leadership of Choncha Siddhaiah and a case was filed in the court. The contention of the respondents was that every thing belonging to the math has come from

public contributions, that it was not private property and that the Will excecuted in favour of Gurappa should be cancelled.

Siddharudha had high reputation. Therefore the court itself came down to the math and the evidence of the Swamiji was taken. Yielding to the pressure of some persons, the Swamiji gave witness that all the belongings of the math were his own and hence private property. Subsequently, in response to the lawers, query he is reported to have said that nothing was his property. The devotees have done everything and the property belongs to all the devotees. Whatever it may be, the court quashed the Will.

The faction of the opportunistic and selfish people was disappointed. They began to nurture feelings on these lines. "All have accepted that Gurunatharudha is the successor. What then is the use of Siddharudha to us? It is likely that he may give away the property to others, if he is alive. It is possible that he may gift away atleast gold and silver. We cannot be sure of this fickle minded old man. He may change his mind at any time". These people did not hesitate even to administer poison to Siddharudha who was the personification of selflessness and humbleness.

On some previous occasion, poison is stated to have been administered twice and Siddharudha has made it ineffective by his Yogic Powers. Again those avaricious and wicked people attempted the

ignominous act for the third time. At this point of time Siddharudha appears to have thought -

"I have become old. The body is very much emaciated. These people do not want my teaching. Why should, "I live and increase their mental anxiety?" and it shook of his mortal frame. What ever it may be, just as the hunter's arrow was the pretext for Lord Krishna for winding up his AVATAR, so too poison was a pretext for Siddharudha to lay down his physical body. In the early hours of the Twenty first day of August 1929, Siddharudha's sacred AVATARA came to an end.

RETROSPECTION

Siddhārudha was a realised person by birth. He had to take birth in order to complete his past Karma. Control of the internal and external senses, renunciation etc are hard to achieve even by assiduous practice. They stayed in him as a part of his being. The reason is not far to seek. It is because of the efforts made in the previous birth. We have to accept this because we advocate the theory of Karma.

Acquisition of devotion does not appear to be great. On the other hand, Non-dualism is beyond human imagination. It is to be obtained as a result of study of Scriptures and teachings of the preceptor. Even before becoming the disciple of Gajadanda Swamy, the faith in Non-dualism was deep rooted in Siddharudha. There is no reason for him to accept to be his disciple other than observance of tradition. He seems to have studied the works of Nijaguna Sivayogi. He was profusely referring to them in his discourses and teaching their contents. His aim to settle in Hubli must have been imparting training, Full details are not available. No one can deny that he had the power to perform miracles. But his greatness need not be established by his capacity to perform miracles. Even a mesmerist does that. By that he cannot become great. Siddharudha's greatness was held high by his teachings and by his conduct according to what he taught.

Among those who were thronging in the math, there were not many who were after knowledge. They wanted miracles. They wanted to eat to their hearts content and

enjoy other facilities. Mostly people aspiring for material pleasures, were visiting the math for submitting their prayers of various kinds. The number of meritorious people was very poor. Some of them, however, felt blessed by the teachings of Siddharudha.

Such persons who have reached heights of yogic meditation have no interest in worldly affairs. When the income and out-going of a math increase-there should be an efficient executive officer. Other wise, the fraudulent affairs which occurred in Siddharudha's math bear witness to what would happen. Sri Gurunatharudha who succeeded Siddharudha Swamy after being initiated into the order, made his name as the favourite disciple of Siddharudha appropriately. He had dedicated himself to the vow of silence. Therefore he could not bring in any special reforms and raise the status of the math to high peak. Now the math is managed by a Body of Trustees. No one can foresee the future. It is the prayer of the devotees that by the grace of Siddharudha, it should rise to great heights of glory and successfully continue the tradition built up by him.

Salutations to Siddharudha who was self controlled who was knowledge personified, who attained siddhi through knowledge and who is to be reached through knowledge.

सिद्धारूढ नमस्तेऽस्तु स्थितप्रज्ञाय ते नमः ।

ज्ञानाय ज्ञानसिद्धाय ज्ञानगम्याय ते नमः ।।

"Ramdas, entering the Math was through the kindness of friend there, duly introduced to Sri Siddharudha at whose feet he prostrated himself most reverently. Here he spent about 10 days most happily. In the mornings and evenings there were reading and exposition of religious texts. Ramdas listened to, nay, drank in the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of the learned Sage. Ram had so arranged matters for him that the upadesh the Swami gave during those days happened to be just what would lead him further in his spiritual progress. At other times, he would wander about in the fields behind the Math and remain mostly at the tomb or samadhi of the late Kabirdas, the great Muslim Saint of that place. Ramdas was clearly able to experience a spiritual atmosphere charged with peace and calmness inside the Math and dharmashala, especially at the time of the presence of the great Swami. Sri Siddharudha was a great Yogi of an advanced age. He was kind, affable, hospitable and full of tranquillity".

-"In quest of God"
A Biography of Swami Ramadas.
Anandashrama Kanhangad-Kerala